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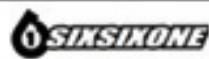
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Working class hero Brad Anderson only knows one way to ride a motocross bike – wide f**king open! © Sutty

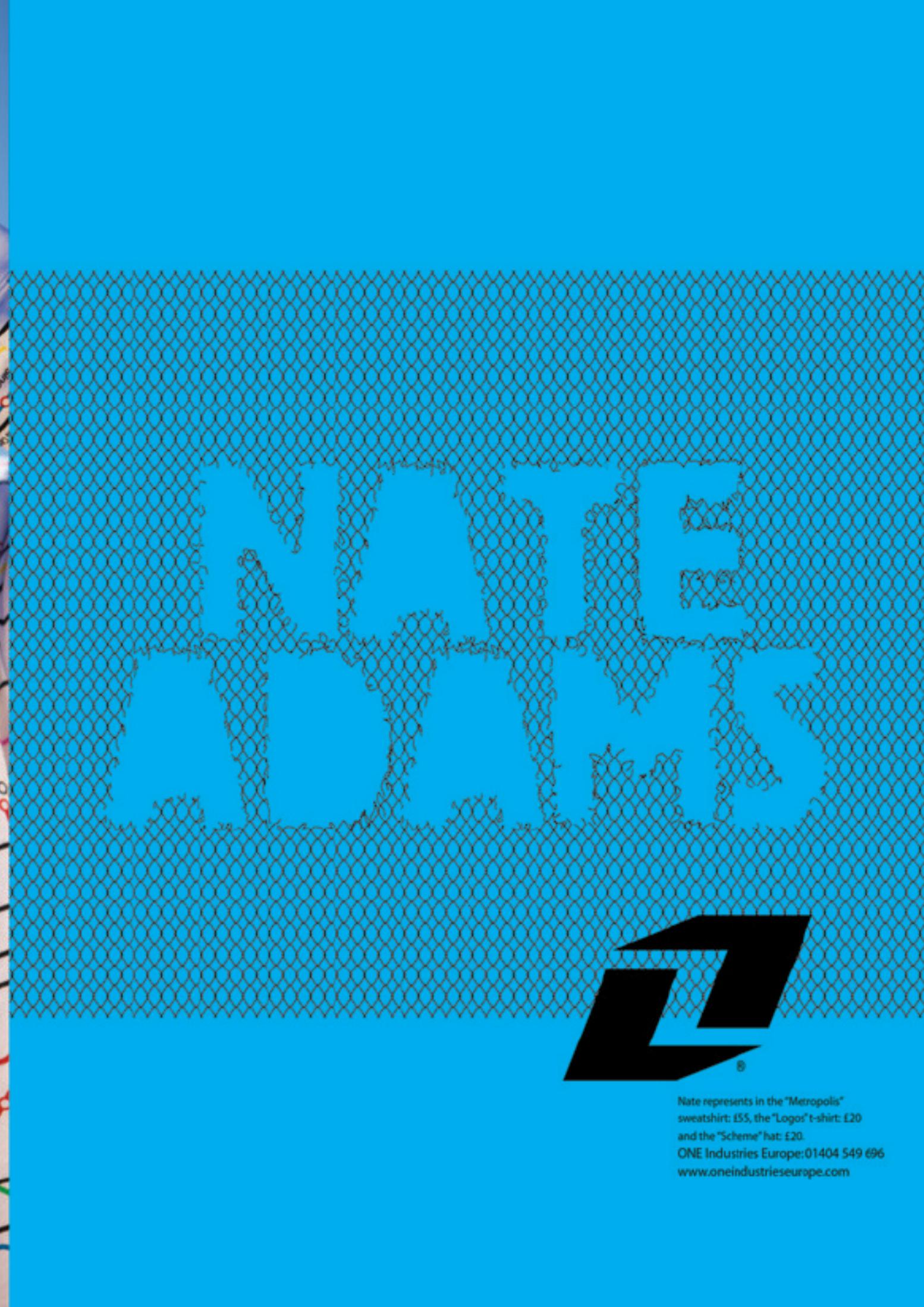
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Two-stroke avenger James Dunn slides his screaming Suzuki around a loamy Silverstone berm © Sutty



DEMX





Nate represents in the "Menropolis" sweatshirt: £55, the "Logo" t-shirt: £20 and the "Scheme" hat: £20.

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COMMENT

It seems that for just about as long as I've been involved in motorbike journalism the Holy Grail has been to attract a more mainstream audience to the sport. It started with mountain biking in the early '90s when the industry realised that a huge and untapped slice of the general population were interested in two-wheeled 'off-road' transport. Wahey! All of a sudden we've got something in common with our next door neighbours! So we tried to sell bikes to them, we tried to sell event tickets to them and, yes, we tried to sell mags to them n'all. And you know what? It didn't really work.

Sure, clothing manufacturers such as Fox saw their market expand massively as MTBers sought a cool alternative to the horrendous day-glo road-based kit on offer and some cyclists even embraced the concept of motorising their transport. But by and large the cyclists remained cyclists for the simple reason that cycling was what interested them.

On the other side of the pond our colonial cousins cracked the mainstream nut when they came up with supercross. Taking heathen, uncivilised motocross out of the countryside and plonking it into city stadiums was a masterstroke. Think about it. No need to head out into the boondocks to see it. No risk of typhoid from a trackside crapper straight out of the Dark Ages. Perfectly formatted to fill a spare evening. And on top of that it's bloody spectacular and exciting.

Now we've tried SX in this country too but it just hasn't captured the mainstream imagination like it has Stateside. It's a Catch 22 situation because if we can't fill the big stadiums it means we can't build the big, spectacular tracks and without these big, spectacular tracks the essence of supercross is lost and the only people who are ever going to be interested are already interested. So that's one possible way of attracting a mainstream audience stuffed. But there are other avenues to explore and we haven't given up yet...

The latest attempt to tap into a mainstream audience – admittedly one already interested in bikes – is the new track at Silverstone. Me and the Deputy Dawger travelled down last month to watch the inaugural event there – round four of the Red Bull Pro Nationals – which just so happened to coincide with the British round of the MotoGP championship. On paper it was a forward-thinking masterstroke that pretty much typifies the approach of the MC Federation. Surely a massive motorbike-mad audience would love to watch some bar-bangin' motocross when the Tarmac action was over for the day? And to a certain extent they did. The three main spectator banks were full for Saturday evening's race programme and judging by the oohs and ahhs and the number of camera phones held aloft for the freestyle display most of the spectators were MotoGP fans who had drifted across from the campsites looking for some extra entertainment.

But it's all about retention. It's great to be able to showcase the sport we all love to the masses. And it's great that at Silverstone they saw some exciting racing and thrilling freestyle. And who cares if the track needs more work to make it acceptable to a motocross audience when the audience on the Saturday night didn't know any better? But we need the retention. We need to make new fans and then keep them. So what do we do? We keep at it, that's what.

And keeping at it is all part and parcel of our upcoming festival of all things off-road. Being staged at FatCat Motoparc near Doncaster on the weekend of July 31/August 1, Dirt 3-2-1 is our way of drawing the mainstream into our little off-road bubble and at the same time laying on an awesome weekend of action for existing fans. Through our parent company's extensive portfolio of local newspapers in Yorkshire and beyond we've heavily publicised the event. We want to tempt Joe Public along to check out off-road sport just like the MCF – who will be running our race programme – did at Silverstone.

Of course, as a DBR reader you've already got your free weekend festival wristband. So keep July 31/August 1 clear, check out the preview starting on page 42 and come and join us...

Levi Sherwood wins in Red Square



© Jörg Mitter/Red Bull Photofiles

© Satty

Red Bull X-Fighters stops off at Disneyland Florida



© Daniel Kolodin/Red Bull Photofiles

NEWSHOUND!

THE DEPUTY DAWGER'S CHAOTIC K-9 COLLECTION OF ALL THAT'S HOT IN THE OFF-ROAD WORLD AND SOME STUFF THAT'S NOT...

It was a close call but not even the support of a bumper home crowd could help 12-time world champion Dougie Lampkin notch up world round win #100 in Scotland t'other week although the enigmatic Yorkshireman came chuffing close and finished second on day one sandwiched between winner Toni Bou and Takahisa Fujinami. While things didn't go so sweetly on day two – where Dougie finished sixth – he was still the darling of all the British trials fans who all enjoyed an amazing weekend of world championship trials action on the Nevis Range.

While Dougie couldn't get the job done the jumpin' Jacks – Challonor and Sheppard – could with the young Beta-mounted Brits running 2-1 over the weekend in their respective classes. By doing so Jack C stays second in the Junior series just three points from the lead position while Jack S sits 10 points from the lead position in the Youth division. Well done to them and all the other British boys – and girl – who managed to score points on home soil.

Gnarly is the word best used to describe conditions at Whiteway Barton for the 60th running of the Patchquick Trophy where Tow Law's premier throttle twister Brad Anderson

dominated all three races on the PAR Homes Honda to take home a wad of cash and a replica of the £20,000 Patchquick Trophy. Second on the night was Buildbase CCM's Scotsman Stephen Sword while BA's team-mate Scott Elderfield edged out Dubliner Stuart Edmonds for the final podium position.

A look further down the results lists – way, way down I might add – brings up another familiar name. Gnarly is the word best used to describe Dickie Dye who apparently time-travelled from the late '80s to try his luck against Ando and the boys. The crazy thing is Dickie actually scored points in the second moto – I can't wait to read all about it in the August '87 issue of Motocross Rider...

Older readers may remember Dickie – and possibly an accomplice – actually winning the Weston Beach Race one year on a KX80 until organisers figured out there might actually be two of him riding around. Was that outright cheating or maybe an error in the space/time continuum? Who knows? But whatever, Dickie will no doubt be glad to know that entries for this year's beach blast – that's going off over the weekend of October 15/16/17 – are now open and there is even an entry form for him to cut out and send in on page 55 of

Sean



Another clean for Dougie who comes so close to that magical 100th world round win

this month's magazine. If his nursing home allows him to use scissors...

If you're in the entering mood – and who's not when it's this hot and sunny – then you'll no doubt want to get yourself booked in for Dirt 3-2-1 that's all set to run over the weekend of July 31/August 1 at FatCat Motoparc in South Yorkshire. With four different disciplines to choose from – supercross, motocross, sprint enduro and endurocross – there's pretty much something for everyone of all ages and skill levels and with a great pile of trophies and prize money up for grabs it's an event that's well worth checking out. For more info hook up to www.dirt321.co.uk or see the full preview later on in t'mag.

Other events that might float your boat this summer include round six of the Red Bull Pro Nationals at Pontrilas on July 12/13, the Dirt Motojumble at Yorkshire Events Centre on Saturday July 24 where's there's bound to be a million and one dirt bike bargains to be had and round five of the Maxxis British champs at Foxhill just one day later.

Also coming up on the calendar – August 14 to be exact – is the Red Bull X-Fighters event at Battersea Power Station where the world's best

FMX riders will be hanging it out in a bid to become the tour champion. Following an awesome event in Moscow's Red Square Andre Villa leads the series by 20 points ahead of Nate 'the Destroyer' Adams so there's everything to play for at the South Bank show that most definitely won't be hosted by Melvyn Bragg.

Back to Moscow for a moment where 40,000 vodka-fuelled fans witnessed a Red Square whitewash by Levi Sherwood who beat back Adams and Villa to win. The New Zealander capitalised on a mistake by Adams in his final run to win his first stop on this year's tour that's currently completely dominated by Yamaha riders.

There's only one Yamaha guy on the shortlist for the 2010 Great Britain des Nations squad and that's Max Anstie who's up for consideration alongside Brad Anderson, Jake Nicholls, Shaun Simpson and Tommy Searle. While logically it would make sense to run as many American-based riders as possible the list has caused uproar with British MX fans who always have plenty to say about the final team selection.

One man many Brits would like to see on the team is Scotsman Dean Wilson who currently plies his trade in America on one of those ridiculously

potent Mitch Payton-tuned KX250Fs. While Wilson represented Canada at last year's MXdN, the British passport holder's current run of results has led to many UK fans wanting to reclaim his ass for queen and country. And in our interview with Deano in this month's mag he say he HAS been approached about riding for Team GB – even though he's not on the short-list released by the ACU. What the fudge is that all about, eh?

Another point of interest to consider though is that the 350F KTM will be available for Nicholls, Simpson and Searle to ride in the MX1 and Open slots should they want it. However, it's also worth remembering that high elevation (Thunder Valley sits at 1250 metres above sea level which is nearly as high as the peak of Ben Nevis – Britain's highest mountain) equals less oxygen in the air which also means less horsepower out of your motor so surely it would make more sense to run full-blown factory 450s where possible instead?

There's one thing for certain no matter what team Steve Dixon chooses come September somebody will be pissed off about it because you can't please all of the people all of the time. But what are your thoughts on it? Write or email in and let us know...

"I had this much lead into the first turn..." Yet more tall tales from the time travelling Dr Dickie Dye...





WIN! WIN! WIN! WIN!

X-FIGHTERS TICKETS AND A NATE ADAMS GOODY BAG PACKED TO THE BRIM WITH ONE INDUSTRIES AND DC SHOE PRODUCTS COURTESY OF WWW.FREESTYLEEXTREME.COM

The good guys at freestyleextreme.com don't like to feck around too much. So when they realised that their good mate Nate Adams was gonna need all the support he can get if he's going to retain his Red Bull X-Fighters crown this year they came up with a plan to ensure that Nate's biggest fan would be at the UK leg at Battersea Power Station on August 14 to cheer their hero on to victory.

But because they – and we – aren't too sure just who Nate's biggest fan is they've teamed up with two of his most awesome sponsors – One Industries and DC Shoes – to put together a piping-hot prize package that every hardcore Nate Adams fan will definitely want to get their hands on. In this way we can entice them out from

wherever they're hiding so we can pounce on them while they're at their most vulnerable. Cunning huh?

The prize pack contains one pair of X-Fighters tickets to the Battersea Power Station stop of the tour, one pair of DC shoes, one DC hoody, one DC t-shirt, one DC cap and one pair of DC shorts plus no fewer than four One Industries t-shirts, a One Industries hoody and a One Industries cap all to be chosen by the eventual winner from the freestyleextreme.com website – booyah! But that's not all because this lucky Nate Adams fan will also win a complete set of One Industries Hart and Huntington racewear too – now if that lot's not worth winning then I don't know what is!

To win this massive mountain of Nate Adams swag all you have to do is answer a question about

the main man himself. So what we want to know is this – what's Nate Adams' nickname?

- Is it:*
- A: The Destroyer**
- B: The Great**
- C: Grizzly**
- D: Morticia**

Once you've got over how easy the answer is we want you to log on to [www.dirtbikerider.com](http://WWW.DIRTBIKERIDER.COM) where you'll need to follow the link to the competitions page, type in your answer, fill out the fields then hit transmit. The comp closes bang on noon **August 5** with the first randomly drawn correct entry winning this frickin' awesome prize package...





WHERE'S ZACH?

FIND ZACH OSBORNE AND WIN A PAIR OF TCX PRO 2 BOOTS

Dixon Cosworth Yamaha's Zach Osborne is leading the Maxxis British MX1 championship by 25 whole points at the halfway stage of the series. In fact, you could say he's booting his rivals into touch. And the boots in question (see what we did there) are a lovely pair of TCX Pro 2s.

Well courtesy of our mates at Nevis Marketing we've got a pair of Pro 2s up for grabs this month and winning them couldn't be much easier. All you've got to do is study this shot of the hirsute American throttle jockey, then flick through the pages of this issue of DBR until you find his head superimposed onto someone else's body.

Once you've worked out Where's Zach you need to text the word **DBRZACH** followed by a space, the page number, another space and then your name and postcode to **64343**. You'll receive a text back confirming your entry to this competition.*

Entries close on **August 5** with the first correct answer chosen at random getting the boots (don't worry, we'll give the winner a bell to get their size)...



GOLDEN PAD

WIN A PAIR OF RENTHAL HANDLEBARS

Renthal, as everyone knows, builds champions – and now one lucky reader can have their very own piece of this winning heritage.

Have a close look at our pic of this golden Renthal bar pad, then flick through this month's mag and find the full pic we've taken it from. Once you've found it simply text the word **DBRRENT** followed by a space, the page number it appears on, another space and then your name and postcode to **64343**. You'll receive a text back confirming your entry to this competition.*

Entries close on **August 5** with the first correct entry chosen at random getting a pair of Renthal handlebars of their choice...

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THE REVEREND

RESTLESS!

WITH A FULL-ON SCHEDULE IT'S IMPORTANT TO TAKE FIVE WHEN YOU GET THE CHANCE – TROUBLE IS JAKE CAN'T STAY STILL FOR TOO LONG...

Here I am again! A whole four weeks have passed from when I last wrote which at the minute means four races have passed too. Three of them being GPs and one British championship in the middle. I'm having to look in my daily diary to try and remember what's been happening as it's as full-on as always.

After returning from America it was so important to get plenty of rest due to all the travelling. I don't think much of it now but the travelling is actually a very tough part of an athlete's job – it's tough to pinpoint when you're actually drained from the travelling or from riding and bad sleep but either way you need to rest. But resting I find hard. If I sit on my ass for a certain amount of time I become restless and I start feeling lazy, even though I know I need to be doing nothing. I'm sure some people reading this will be thinking 'WHAT! I wouldn't mind resting' but it's tough.

Being a pro rider (in my case) means that I don't have a boss as such – don't get me wrong, Mr Magee isn't any pushover but he's not stood at the workshop door at 9am tapping his watch. So it takes a lot of willpower to do what we do because I could have it easy if I wanted. It's Tuesday morning now and I got home Monday at 1am from Latvia. I cycled yesterday, I will cycle again this morning then boxing tonight but no-one's making me do it. But deep down I know it will have an effect on my performance and on my confidence for this weekend if I don't and best of all I absolutely love it all...

It was the French GP straight after USA. We had a cool trip down there as Steve, Blu and I followed my old man and mother dear in their camper. It's a fair old drive but Steve was at the helm. We got all set up and I was actually sneaking my way out of dad's camper where I had just left him a marvellous bit of artwork in his lavatory when I met the Herd who were stood outside. I was well pumped to see all the boys (and some parents I might add, Steve the bastide and Wayne and Sue) there as I had barely caught up with them since I'd been back and I love having their support... It didn't go so well for me as I had a crash in the qualifying race giving me last gate pick, then on Sunday I was 11th and had a pisser which stung a bit before ending up 15th. Then second race I was ninth and got cleaned out by a lapper and ended 13th which sucked.

That weekend it rained back in Suffolk which put a smile on my face as it meant I could ride my track. That Tuesday night after boxing my ol' mate Ginge drove his big John Deere over and ripped the track up for me which was awesome, it did it the world of good. Next day Dave Willet and his brother came over and did some riding which was mega – whenever I ride there in

good conditions it just gives me such a boost in confidence. We did a fair bit of quality riding so I had a steady day on Thursday then Carl Nunn came over Friday and we had a mega day, I love riding with Carl as I've always looked up to him since I was five riding a 50 at Mildenhall, plus he's such a pleasant rider to watch and he doesn't blow all my berms out that I spend all session trying to make, ha ha!

Then it was Lyng where I got second overall for the second year in a row. I was gutted not to win but threw it away in the first moto while leading with two laps to go. I think I just got a bit edgy as I hadn't led a race for a while. It was awesome to get a start to finish win though, especially in front of my home fans who were absolutely brilliant to say the least – I was as gutted for them that I didn't win overall as I was for myself.

Then Germany the following weekend where I had a hard crash in qualifying race but still did all right – 10th in the first moto was an average ride for me but still not a bad result, then in the second race I slipped off while in 10th and got rode into which pulled my glove off. I came back from last to 17th though and still got 12th overall.

I got home and the weather was immaculate and we did fight club on Tuesday which was awesome. I did 40 minutes of non-stop sparring and I was totally spent – the Herd were in rotation and did really well. Those boys are coming on good now so watch out in the beer tent – the boys got skills. With the weather being kind I spent most of the week out on the jetski in the lake which was wicked. Then Thursday I rode Mildenhall as Cliff preps it well this time of year in the dry weather and everywhere else is like a desert, including my track (weeps). Then it was off to Latvia.

I travelled with Jamie Coppins as Holeshot's currently giving birth. I always have a craic with Jamie even if he can't say '10' right – bloody Kiwis! Latvia was good and I qualified eighth. In the first race I had the helmet camera on so I was doomed to crash and I did in the first corner so I rode my sack off to come from last to 13th. Some may have seen a bit of an onion bhaji between me and Karro on TV – basically I wasn't happy as I moved out of the way for the leaders and he got in their way and tried passing me every time. He ruined Herlings' last two laps and stuffed me into a bank when I moved over for Herlings. I told him what I thought as we rode off the track and he rode into me and shouted something in my face. Well, I don't take any s**t! Second race I held fifth for half the race before fading a bit after using so much energy in the first race so I came in 10th.

That's yer lot for another month. All the best and go hard...

SPECTRUM SERIES

TOMMY SEARLE

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LAMAY STAYS!

ALASKAN TEENAGE EXTENDS DEAL
WITH SAMSUNG YAMAHA

American teenager Ben LaMay will race in the UK until at least 2012 after agreeing terms with team boss Roy Emberson to remain on the Samsung Yamaha team. After a slow start to the season the 18-year-old from Anchorage in Alaska has found his feet so far from home, picking up the pace to become a regular on the MX1 podium at the Red Bull Pro Nationals.

Last year Ben contested the AMA Supercross series and scored good points in the Nationals before having a guest ride at the final round of the Maxxis series at Landrake where he first appeared on Embo's radar.

"Ben's a good boy," reckons Roy, "and I'm glad to keep hold of him. We had a few problems earlier on but I told you he'd come good once we worked things out and he has. And we still haven't seen the best of him. It's going to cost me a bit more but we're both happy with what we've agreed on."

Ben used his SX experience to good effect at round five of the Red Bull Pro Nationals at the jump-filled Skelder Bank track, coming back from a second corner crash in the opening moto to fifth before showing the full field – including Maxxis British champ Brad Anderson – a clean set of heels with a gate-to-flag win second time out.

"The racing over here is great," says Ben. "It's new for me every time I go out to a track but I'm really enjoying it. It's fun."

Ben LaMay's starting to make a big impact in the UK



SHOW BUSINESS!

STONELEIGH STAND SALES SOAR

Exhibition space sales for the 2010 International Dirt Bike Show are running well ahead of last year with previous exhibitors booking early to secure favoured positions as well as extra space.

"We are running over 30 per cent ahead of the same period last year," says show organiser Joanne Watson, "and given the current uncertain economic situation we are delighted with the response from both previous and new exhibitors alike."

The new international aspect of the show aims to attract foreign visitors and exhibitors to Europe's only major specialist off-road show and with many low-cost international travel options to Stoneleigh the organisers are confident that the show is set to continue to grow in 2010.

The 2010 International Dirt Bike Show is at Stoneleigh Park from November 4-7. For more info visit www.dirtbikeshow.co.uk



CROCKSTAR

GOOD TIMES!

GORDY'S FIT, HEALTHY AND ENJOYING HIS RACING WHICH IS A VAST IMPROVEMENT ON THIS TIME LAST YEAR – AND THE YEAR BEFORE...

Words by Gordon Crockard Photo by Sutty

Welcome to July! I personally like July and look forward to seeing how this one goes. Last year I had only just started again after being hurt at the beginning of the season so it was a bit different to now and the year previous to that was when I had just returned from the GNCC series in America. So my point is that 2010 has been the first year since '07 that I have raced motocross up to the month of July.

Anyways... I'm quite ready to push through to the end of the year now as I feel I have got to the halfway stage of the season with some decent form. My focus is to have fun and race for the win at all of the races I compete in. Some days are easier than others to do that and all I can do is keep believing in myself that the wins are possible.

On June 2 I did the first round of the Wednesday evening Rhayader series. I had some wins and some second place finishes and left the event looking forward to the next round there as it was a good atmosphere and nice to have a pressure-free race meeting. I had a brief chat with Kenny Kay the commentator prior to the start of the races and he asked me if I had been doing a lot of training as he reckoned I appeared lean and in good shape. I answered by telling him that I don't train as training is for unfit people the same way as dieting is for fat people. I was only joking and having a bit of craic but Kenny went on to announce this over the PA while he was commentating about me during the night's racing. I didn't hear it but a mate told me the story of what was said. I cringed as to what people must think of me if they didn't know I was joking.

Foxhill was my next destination for a British Masters round on the Sunday that followed. I do enjoy the venue as it has so much nostalgia and historical atmosphere from the great days of the GPs being there. In race one I had a first turn bashing and my front disc got completed bent stupid and I was left with the rest of the moto to ride with no front brake. I had three separate massive moments on the two biggest downhills where my hands got jolted over the bars due to hitting big holes too fast as I struggled to slow down with no front brake. Race two went better and I ran second place only to lose it to Ben LaMay on the last half-lap due to a mistake on the ice-like slick ground after the downpour of rain mid-moto. I got third though.

After Foxhill my goal was to prepare for the sand race at Lyng for the Maxxis British round. I had a bit of difficulty finding sand tracks that I could practice on through the week. I ended up riding at Finningley in Doncaster and also Preston Docks. They both are great places to practice but I would have preferred them to be as rough as Lyng turns out. The average punter who goes to a practice track doesn't want it rough so I understand why the track owners have them well prepared and fairly bumbless.

Lyng sucked for me. I was so frustrated by the end of the day and really found it difficult to accept the outcome. I couldn't pass guys much slower than me

and I didn't holeshot. My results were a very bad reflection of the pace I had on the day.

The MC Federation had a press day to launch the new track at Silverstone on the Tuesday after Lyng so I attended and did some media work and rode the motocross track and also the supercross track. The ground was well hard and all involved knew the task of watering was high on the agenda before the weekend's event which was the Red Bull Pro National being held in conjunction with the MotoGP. It was fun to hang out with the other riders who also rode that day and nice to get a preview of the venue. The potential is big and the critics will have their say while they can but I promote what is trying to be achieved and wish them the best of luck with the Silverstone motocross track.

Back to Wales for the second round of the Rhayader evening series was where I went on the Wednesday and I had Ando to try and beat this time. I finished second to Brad and almost beat him in the last one. I passed him with three laps to go but on the same lap rode into a blown-out berm and got all screwed up and he got back past me.

Thursday morning I headed back over to Silverstone and stayed right through to Sunday evening and man it felt like a lot longer than four days I can tell you. Personally, I don't think the concept worked under the format that was run. The MX appeared a sideshow to the main reason why people had come to Silverstone and the general vibe and enthusiasm around the MX venue had lowered throughout the weekend. But I believe the guys involved will make the adjustments required to get it working right. It was a huge ask to try and make it a success first time round and I salute you for having the gonads to take on the challenge.

I spent the next week trying to improve my own conditioning and also my bike's suspension set-up. I think I definitely achieved a better bike set-up and I went to Whitby for another Red Bull Pro National with a good feeling and all fired up. Race one I ended up third behind Brad and Jim Bob Noble. I was in front of Brad for most of the race and one mistake by me was enough to let him get past. We both caught up on the leader Noble but no pass was completed by either of the three of us. I was happy to be within striking distance again of the win. Race two I got fifth after a bad first turn and not getting through the pack well early enough on.

This week I have returned home to Northern Ireland and slowly I'm getting some progress made with other priorities besides motorbikes. The sun is shining most days which I love. This Friday I'm running the Ards Half Marathon for a spot of social training. Should be all right as long as I don't get all competitive and push on too hard too soon. That historically is not my style anyway so I think I'll be safe enough.

See ya in a bit...





DOUBLE THRILL!

THE ERZBERG RODEO HARE SCRABBLE AND RED BULL ROMANIACS
ENSURE JUNE'S A GREAT MONTH FOR MASOCHISTS...

Exreme enduros are big business and arguably the two biggest extreme enduros in the business were both held in June making it a great month for suffering.

The Erzberg Rodeo Red Bull Hare Scramble and the five-day marathon of masochism that is the Red Bull Romaniacs stretch man and machine to the absolute limit, the first offering competitors a relatively short, sharp shock compared to the latter's more drawn out method of torture.

Polish extreme specialist Taddy Blazusiak goes into Erzberg looking for his fourth straight win on Austria's Iron Mountain. And despite an early cock-up that drops him from first back to sixth the former WTC regular quickly recovers and regains the lead which he then simply refuses to surrender, eventually coming home in a time of 1.45:43.

"I felt pretty good early on but then I made a small mistake, which cost me quite a lot of time," says Taddy. "I hit a tree stump and ended up quite a long way down a hill I'd already ridden up. I arrived at the checkpoint from the wrong side but they didn't allow me to continue so I had to go back and come at it the correct way."

"I dropped from first to about sixth because of that. I chased the riders ahead of me like a maniac from that point. I was riding like I was in an enduro special test – I really gave it everything. I actually worked my way back into the lead quite quickly and once I was there I just maintained my lead."

More than 10 minutes behind Taddy is Factory BMW rider Andreas Lettenbichler – who claims his third runner-up finish at Erzberg – followed by British trials legend Dougie Lampkin. A 12-time world champ, Dougie was air-lifted to hospital last year after collapsing with heat exhaustion and then taking a rock to his head but this time around he makes it to the finish.

After arriving at the infamous collection of huge rocks known as Karl's Diner fighting for second with Lettenbichler and fellow Brit Graham Jarvis, Dougie loses touch as his stamina is put fully to the test. "I was so tired in the middle that I must have lost

100 metres on Jarvis and Lettenbichler. I definitely lost second in Karl's Diner."

His 400cc Beta also develops a misfire in the later stages but the pair keep on keeping on and when Jarvis is excluded for missing checkpoints Dougie's promoted to the final step on the podium.

Erzberg has become a big day out for the Brits and Paul Bolton follows Dougie home in fourth, one place ahead of Dan Hemmingway. Andy Cripps also gets in on the act in 11th with Lee Sampson 12th and Andrew Reeves taking 15th.

Just a few weeks later and Taddy's back in action again, this time in the Carpathian mountains of Romania where he's having his first crack at the Red Bull Romaniacs. But after the Prologue to decide starting positions he doesn't even make it to the end of the first full day after crashing and aggravating a shoulder injury.

With Blazusiak out the way's clear for Jarvis to streak to an impressive early advantage, ending the day in a time of seven hours and 25 minutes to open up a 40-minute gap back to second-placed Chris Birch with defending champ Lettenbichler a whopping two hours off the Brit's scorching pace in third.

But day two spells disaster for Grimbo when his Sherco develops a mechanical problem. Birch also develops a fault with his bike but, in keeping with the spirit of the event, a fellow KTM-mounted competitor helps out with spares for the Kiwi. Unfortunately for the Brit, Sherco riders are a little thinner on the ground and he loses a stack of time.

With the top two from day one struggling on day two it's Lettenbichler who wins the day by 24 minutes ahead of Bolts.

But the overall advantage remains with Birch and after a further two days in the saddle it's the Kiwi who claims the Romaniacs title with a total time of 28 hours and 17 minutes. Jarvis, who won the event in 2008, comes home second with a time of 28 hours and 46 minutes and Lettenbichler's third in 29 hours and 18 minutes, just 34 minutes in front of Bolts.



© Mihai Stetcu/Red Bull Photofiles

RESULTS

ERZBERG RODEO HARE SCRABBLE >>

1	Taddy Blazusiak	KTM
2	Andreas Lettenbichler	BMW
3	Dougie Lampkin	Beta
4	Paul Bolton	KTM
5	Ben Hemmingway	KTM
6	Cory Graffunder	Husqvarna
7	Jade Gutzeit	Yamaha
8	Kurt Caselli	KTM
9	Gerhard Forster	BMW
10	Darryl Curtis	KTM

RED BULL ROMANIACS >>

1	Chris Birch	KTM
2	Graham Jarvis	Sherco
3.	Andreas Lettenbichler	BMW
4	Paul Bolton	KTM
5	Jade Gutzeit	KTM
6	Lionel Seydoux	KTM
7	Gerhard Forster	BMW
8	Darryl Curtis	KTM
9	Emanuel Gyenes	KTM
10	Erich Brandauer	Husaberg

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SWORDY

HARD SLOG!

STEVIE'S BEEN STRUGGLING TO GET BACK TO FULL FITNESS BUT AT LAST THERE'S SOME LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL...

Words by Stephen Sword Photo by Sutty

Finally the summer has arrived and what a difference it makes being able to train more outside without the risk of freezing to death and also everyone seems to be in a more upbeat mood. Once again the month has not been a great one regarding racing but I'm putting so much pressure on myself to be 100 per cent better and feeling good on the CCM. It takes time and that is something that I don't have as this season is moving so fast and I have been stuck in the same position for so long. I'm sure I'll be able to turn it around to the best of my ability soon.

I was planning to start the GPs again this month but it was not to be due to me struggling with my recovery. We had a British this month at Lyng which did not go well for me and I really struggled with arm pump which I only ever really get at the beginning of the year. I hate the fact that with each British more and more points are slipping away but I'm doing everything I can so at Foxhill I can hopefully turn this around. After all I've been in a far worse position at this point and still managed to bring home the championship back in 2002 when it went down to the last race with me and Billy MacKenzie so never say never, I still have time!

I've had tough month training, desperately trying to get my fitness back to where I should be so I'm spending time on the bike – we've been testing a lot at the minute and are all so eager to get better. I'm hoping to get back to the GPs as soon as possible so maybe by the end of July? I've been training in the gym and also out for long cycles so feel I am moving forward and can now see light at the end of the tunnel. My fitness is getting there now all I need is race time so I can lose the arm pump.

I did the Red Bull Pro Nationals at Silverstone and it was a massive event. The MotoGP road racers were there so in between their races we had our races. It was a three-day event with practice on Friday, Saturday evening we had a supercross race and then on the Sunday there was more racing. It was cool to see the turn-out but that was mainly because of the road racing. Hey, if a few of the road racing fans were converted into liking MX it can only be

a positive for the sport so I thought it was a great idea. It was hard as I'm not used to racing over a few days and I did struggle with fatigue. I realised at that point that I am not yet 100 per cent to race for two days at the GPs which was a massive blow after all the hard work I am putting into my recovery. Although I came away feeling annoyed and upset with my ability the positive was I knew where I was at so I can get to a GP and be able to get a good result rather than going and struggling to race over two days. I cannot believe how much this illness has taken from me and the recovery is taking so much time, time I don't have.

On the last evening in June I did the famous Patchquick Trophy race. I was asked to do it by Barry Moore from Phoenix Tools who is the title sponsor of the event and as I need race time it was a good race to do. It was so hot and dusty but the track was good and they did a great job in trying to keep the dust down as with all this dry weather the ground was baked hard.

Practice and qualifying I felt good but once the first race started I knew that I was going to struggle with arm pump – I did and came second. The second race went better and I raced the whole distance with Brad Anderson. I felt so much stronger and could hold my speed. We came over the line nearly side by side so I was pleased – I'm going in the right direction at last.

The last race I holeshot and held the lead for a while but kept making stupid mistakes when I came up behind back markers which allowed Brad to take the lead. But it was a race right to the finish again so was great for the spectators.

I've also been up to Scotland for a few days and got to spend time with my family. Ayrton was adored and very spoilt by everyone. He enjoyed it so much and it was great to see my brother as I don't get to see him enough so it was nice just chilling with him. I think they are all coming down to Foxhill which will be good.

Anyway, that's it for another month – enjoy the weather while it lasts!

Braaaaaap #71



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Q: With all of the injuries you suffered early on in your career did you ever think about packing in motocross?

Martin Bell, Truro

A: "I'll be honest, it crossed my mind once when I was 10 – I had just broken my wrist badly while leading the 65cc British champs, it was the seventh time I'd broken an arm and I woke up from the op and for a while I said perhaps we should try go-karting or something but it didn't last long. Every time I broke something I was always close to getting back to form so it just made me hungrier and hungrier for success and I think that's what's got me to where I am now – I've never given up."

Q: After riding the Suzuki was it easy to adapt to riding the KTM?

Neil Smith, Coventry

A: "Extremely easy! Straight away I rode the KTM better. The Suzuki is a good bike but I'm a big lad and I just felt way more suited to the KTM's chassis and also the stock grunt they have."

Q: Does having your own track in your back garden give you much of an advantage over your rivals?

Ian Bradshaw, Ipswich

A: "I think it gives me an advantage on fuel economy and mileage, ha ha! Nah, I mean everyone at our level goes riding in the week so it doesn't really matter where you go but I'm lucky here when it rains cause it's a proper all-weather track and also I never have any traffic."

Q: What are the biggest differences between yours and Musquin's bikes?

Dave Hellyar, Barnstable

A: "The difference is basically that his is a full-factory 2011 and my bike is a standard 2010 bike with an in-house tuned engine and aftermarket parts plus semi-factory WP suspension. It would be interesting to get a ride on his bike and feel the difference but I love my bike and I believe in it big time."

Q: Roger Magee comes across as the most laidback and mellow man on earth – does he have a temper and have you ever been on the receiving end of it?

Shaun Irvine, Bovington

A: "You hit the willy on top of the helmet there with Roger! He's exactly that and such a good team boss, he doesn't get too involved but he knows when and when not to say things. I've certainly not seen a temper in him, he doesn't take any s**t though but as long as you give 100 per cent and don't give excuses he's sound. I think that's why we get on."



JAKE NICHOLLS

THE REVEREND SPILLS THE BEANS ON INJURIES, GETTING WHUPPED BY NAT KANE AND WHY MAKING THE MX DES NATIONS TEAM MEANS SO MUCH...

Interview by JP O'Connell Photo by Sutty

Q: Does the factory KTM team share their set-up tips with you?

Paul Hocking, Queen Camel

A: "No, the factory team are very tight-knit and you'll never get anything like that but it's understandable as our bike is way different to theirs. But Wayne and Jeremy, our mechanics, know the score and we don't often struggle in that area and we are supported by WP so they help with suspension."

Q: Zach Osborne seems to have found some form this season – do you think you have what it takes to beat him to the British championship?

Simon Trott, Derby

A: "Zach is having a hell of a year and fair play to him, he deserves it. The 20-minute races are not my style and they suit him quite well so it's tough. I'm working hard right now on that first sector of the race so I'm confident I can pressure him and beat him before the end of the season. I was leading at Lyng in race one before I took a dirt sample and I won race two so we'll see."

Q: You said in your column that you went to Hangtown the week before the USGP. How differently are the AMA Nationals and GPs run?

Mark House, Twickenham

A: "Well it's all on one day which I think sucks a bit and there's no atmosphere or build up to them so it was weird. Being the first round and all we were expecting big hype and stuff but it was dead. They have two qualifying sessions in the morning which is like a race as people just pound out laps trying to get one in as

they don't have much time, then they have two motos and it's finished. Pretty weird and the races are only 30+2 so they seem to go quick. Would say it's a hell of a lot easier on a rider than the GPs as we do so much riding, it wouldn't be enough for me though."

Q: Is it true that Nat Kane frequently gives you a whuppin' when the team goes testing? That's what Steve Potter tells me anyways...

Natalie Kane, Northern Ireland

A: "Ha ha! Nat is a good rider but she's been struggling of late with her wrist injury. She used to beat a lot of lads in her schoolboy days but it's hard for girls to get to the next level where the guys are at. So no."

Q: You're doing really well in the GPs – do you see a podium finish this season?

Darren Smith, Reigate

A: "Thank you and, yes, that's my aim. At the minute I'm trying to put two top five results together in a day and have a crack at the podium. But I'm just going to keep knocking away and edging my way to it."

Q: How long do you plan to stay in MX2 before moving up to the 450s?

Pete Wellington, Stratford

A: "I honestly want to stay down until I'm 23 – the way I look at it is if it all goes well I will be racing until I'm 30-odd and that gives me seven years racing the big bike. I don't see any point in moving up just yet, only thing is my size though as I'm quite a big ol' boy for MX2 but I keep my weight down well at the minute, it just depends on whether I get any bigger."

Q: What would it mean to you to be selected for this year's des Nations team?

Nick Bell, Wimborne

A: "It would be unreal to say the least! Anyone that knows me well knows that I'm such a big MX fan as well as a rider and I've been to watch so many Nations races and the hairs stand up on my back when I think about riding in it."

Q: Does your dad travel to watch you in the GPs?

Jimmy Weston, Birmingham

A: "Guy Woo Woo comes to a few with my mum in the year but he hates flying with a passion so it's a no to most other than the Euro ones like Holland and Belgium. He did make a rare appearance in Italy and France this year but he moaned that it was too hot and sat in his camper a lot of the weekend with the air-con on."

Q: If you were to finish the GP season within the top 10 would you drop your 45 for the single digit next season?

Paul Holbrook, Martock

A: "No way, I'm holding the 45 strong at the minute. Good question though but nah."

NEXT MONTH

ROBBIE MADDISON >>

Yep, this is your chance to pin down and probe everyone's favourite antipodean – nope, it's not Kylie, it's Aussie FMX legend Robbie 'Maddo' Maddison...

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DBR: Who would play you in a film of your life?

EG: "Back in the day it would have to have been Clint Eastwood."

DT: "Dickie Dye!"

DBR: How often did you clean your air filters?

EG: "Before I was a pro I would clean all of them, after every practice. Once I turned pro it was a professional service provided by the filter manufacturer."

DT: "During my pro career never, before I was pro then my dad would do them!"

DBR: Would you be able to check the valve clearances on a modern four-stroke?

EG: "No, no!"

DT: "Yeah, I could do that."

DBR: Have you ever eaten anything that you've killed?

EG: "Well I have been hunting and killed pheasants but not ate the ones I've killed but I have eaten things that other people have hunted."

DT: "No, I don't think I have."

DBR: How many bones have you broken?

EG: "During my riding career I broke 12."

DT: "Bones? Oh God – 20 or 30 I guess. I broke my fingers, my hand, my leg, toes, foot, ankle, my ribs – it goes on doesn't it!"

DBR: Something you used to eat that you know you shouldn't have?

EG: "Definitely mayonnaise."

DT: "Chocolate."

DBR: You were in second and on the leader's rear wheel – would you have taken him out in the last corner for the win?

EG: "If I could do it properly then yes, do it hard then yes – but not illegal or unfairly."

DT: "If there was an opportunity to push my way past then I would but I wouldn't deliberately put someone down for the win. A 50/50 corner then I would always try to win it."

DBR: What was the highlight of your career?

EG: "I think the highlight was when I won the 500 title in '88, making me the first person to win titles in all three classes. That was a very nice feeling."

DT: "Winning my three world championships – I don't think any one of them was better than the others, they were all good."

DBR: What car were you driving when you were the 500 world champ?

EG: "That was a Mercedes C Class."

DT: "It was either a Mercedes or a Porsche 911 depending on what year you were on."

DBR: And if money were no object back then?

EG: "A Porsche 930 which was the 911 Turbo."

DT: "It would have been one of the above – to be honest cars don't really do it for me."

DBR: Did you ever blame a poor result on a non-existent 'mechanical' issue?

EG: "Never, never."

DT: "Never."

DBR: Were you ever arrested during your heyday?

EG: "No but I came very close while in the USA for reckless driving in a Corvette!"

DT: "Never, not even close."

DBR: Back in the day, if you could have changed anything about yourself what would it have been?

EG: "Hmmm, I think it would have been to have been less jealous of my girlfriend – by that I mean I was maybe a bit too controlling, always wanting to know where she was, always wanting to see her about."

DT: "I guess I would have liked to have been more mentally strong when I was injured – it's always the toughest time."

DBR: What's the most embarrassing thing you've done while drunk?

EG: "[Laughing] I am too embarrassed to even tell you! Oh Jesus, I came out of a pub with a group of people and we were pretty loaded with alcohol. One of them decides to pee against a wall in the middle of the town so I decide to do the same. As I'm doing it I look across the street straight into an ice-cream bar where my brother Sylvain is eating a cone looking straight back at me – I think he was just as embarrassed as I was!"



GOLDEN OLDIES!

WITH NINE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS BETWEEN THEM, ERIC GEBOERS AND DAVE THORPE ARE GENUINE MX LEGENDS – AND BOTH, AS YOU'RE ABOUT TO FIND OUT, WERE PREPARED TO LET IT ALL HANG OUT. IN PUBLIC!

Interviews and photo by JP O'Connell

DT: "It was on a Sunday night after the des Nations in '95 or '96, a few of us went for a swim in a fountain – naked. I left my clothes on the side and Jeremy McGrath threw them in for me so I was sodden and naked!"

DBR: If you could meet any person – living or dead – who would it be?

EG: "Ummmm, Barack Obama."

DT: "Mike Tyson so I could try to understand how it all went wrong."

DBR: If you were shipwrecked on an island what three things would you want with you?

EG: "A lap-top with a very good battery, a blanket to keep warm and a pair of fins to go swimming with."

DT: "My phone and my family, if I've got those then I'm all good."

DBR: What's your favourite film?

EG: "Silence of the Lambs."

DT: "I quite enjoyed Cliffhanger."

DBR: When you were racing what was your most annoying habit?

EG: "I was always very tense and I was maybe a kind of an asshole to the people around me. I was a difficult person to be around because I was always concentrating on my sport and I didn't want anyone asking me anything if it wasn't absolutely necessary. If I wanted a drink then I would have asked for a drink, do you see what I mean?"

DT: "For the people around me I guess it would be that I was pretty hard on myself, I wouldn't accept anything other than 100 per cent from myself. Most people would say 'well you're winning so you're doing all right' but unless I felt I'd been 100 per cent then I wasn't particularly happy."

DBR: Where is your favourite place on earth?

EG: "Bora Bora."

DT: "Being at home."

DBR: Do you have any fears or phobias?

EG: "I don't think so."

DT: "No."

DBR: What's your most prized possession?

EG: "My son and daughter."

DT: "That's my family."

DBR: Which was your favourite race out of your whole career?

EG: "All the times that I raced the Le Touquet beach race."

DT: "That was the race that I had with Eric at Namur back in 1989."

DBR: Have you ever been in a fight?

EG: "Yes, there were a couple back when I was riding but I can't say who with! And no, one wasn't with Dave!"

DT: "Yes, both on and off the track – I'd rather not say who with!"

DBR: Was winning a race better than sex?

EG: "Ohhh yes!"

DT: "No."

DBR: How do you have your steak?

EG: "Medium to well."

DT: "Medium rare."

DBR: Blonde or brunette?

EG: "Brunette."

DT: "Brunette."

DBR: Something about yourself nobody else knows?

EG: "As a present to myself for winning the '88 world championship I bought the last mechanical turbo Porsche 911 to come off the production line. I said to myself that I would never drive that car and I would give it to my son – which as I wasn't married and had no children meant it may never have been driven. As it happens my son was born 10 years later and the car still sits waiting for him – 22 years old and with 0 miles!"

DT: "I'm actually quite soft really!"



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BARR'S BANGIN'

ONLY A MECHANICAL PROBLEM STOPS MARTIN BARR FROM TAKING SIX RED BULL PRO NATIONAL WINS ON THE BOUNCE AS THE BALLYCLARE MAN HITS TOP FORM...

Words by Stevie Mills Photo by Sutty

The man on a mission right now is none other than Martin Barr and what a result the PAR Homes Honda rider posted with four race wins at the recent Red Bull Pro Nationals extravaganza at Silverstone. But what a difference a week can make and a mechanical issue at Whitby during round four of the series has knocked Martin's lead back to six points despite him winning the second moto of the day.

GC is absolutely flying! I know his results at Silverstone would argue against that point but it's the same old story – a happy Gordy is hard to beat. He didn't like the Silverstone circuit and it showed in his results, he enjoyed Whitby and chased the leaders home for fourth overall on the day.

The John Donnelly Motocross Trophy was won by young Gary Gibson aboard his Watt KTM. Gary must have got out of the right side of the bed that particular Saturday morning as he was in dynamic form around the Downpatrick circuit. Hounded all the way to the chequered flag in the first moto by the returning Graeme Irwin on the HM Plant Red Bull KTM UK machine, Gibson earned his first win of the day by just over half-a-second from Irwin with Davy Gorman on his AJ Elite KTM in third.

Gibson snatched another photofinish win in the second moto from G&G Ross Yamaha racer Robert Hamilton. Hammy chased the fast-starting Gibby but ran out of time and Irwin filled out the podium in third. The final race was red flagged due to an accident – get well soon G&G Ross rider Keith Finnmore – and Irwin claimed the shortened final moto win from Hamilton and Jason Garrett. Gibson's fourth place finish was good enough to earn the prestigious John Donnelly Trophy by the

narrowest of margins – one point – from Irwin.

Ulster MX2 championship action returned to the spectacular Tinkerhill circuit where pole-setter Wayne Garrett blitzed to the front in race one and then vanished off the radar on the third lap. The blame game aside, a 'coming together' with another rider has dropped a spanner in the works for Wayne's championship aspirations for 2010.

Reigning MX2 champion Richard Bird on the Watt/GOMX KTM was unable to make the start at Tinkerhill following a collision with a rider at the British Masters which resulted in Ricky sustaining damage to his thumb. Hammy continued his return to the top by recording two moto wins for the overall and Jason Garrett finished second overall on his AJ Elite Bathrooms KTM while Tommy Merton was having a good day for third aboard a standard Kawasaki 250F.

The very next day it was a trip down the road for round four of the Irish championship at Dundalk Moto Park – a challenging, well-prepared circuit which always provides riders and spectators with all the thrills of close racing. In the MX1 class it was a battle royal between ex team-mates. Hammy and Merton took a moto win apiece with Merton pipping Hamilton for the overall as the G&G Ross Yamaha rider hit the deck in the final race.

Merton leads the standings on his Watt Kawasaki by three points from Hamilton with the absent Crock Star still holding third position with four rounds to run. It must be said that with Wayne and Richard Bird on the injured list and the Crock Star plying his trade in the UK that weekend it was pretty much a two-horse race at the front of the MX1 class.

Keith Finnmore is a clear leader in the Grade B series at the halfway point with a 69-point advantage over Donal Teague with Joel Brown from Saintfield filling out the top three. MX2 Grade B leader Ryan Adair is fighting tooth and nail for this championship – the Dromore-based rider is locked in battle with John Mera and Mark Dynes with only 10 points splitting first to fifth place.

Going back to basics is working for the Carrick MC and their Norman Watt-sponsored summer grasstrack series continues to grow in both rider and spectator support. Series leader after two rounds, Wayne Garrett has been consistent although recent injury may just create an opportunity for the Tubstar or surprise race winner last time out Ricky Watt. Seriously though, Neil Thompson and Ricky have been the revelation of this series so far and their speed on grass has shocked many of their competitors.

Charles Stewart is dominating the two-stroke championship, taking six wins from as many starts. Second is Ricky Watt on the GC 500cc Honda with David Kincaid in third spot. In the Veterans class it's enduro legend Paul McGuire who heads the points from Michael McBride in second place, just in front of Michael Gibson.

Our sole GP interest at the moment, Natalie Kane is having a tough time. Natalie has continued to race through her injuries and managed to score points in every GP moto this season although she has yet to race this season 100 per cent fit. Sixth in the world is not where Natalie hoped to be at this point in the season but with two GPs left it's possible that she can still climb up the leaderboard. We wish her well...

Stevie
dirtbikerider 27



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**Mexico has the space
needed to host the ISDE
but not the security**



DYING TO COMPETE?

WITH DRUG RELATED MURDERS IN MEXICO RISING AT AN ALARMING RATE IS IT SAFE FOR THIS YEAR'S INTERNATIONAL SIX DAYS ENDURO TO BE HELD IN MORELIA?

Words and photo by Jonty Edmunds

When a nation like Australia – one of the most supportive and competitive teams at the ISDE – opt to withdraw from an event they love and look forward to you know there's a serious reason behind their decision. And there is. Murder rates in Mexico and more importantly – as far as the six days goes – in the host city of Morelia are up. Not just a little but a lot. Yes, that's right – people are getting murdered, in significant numbers, in the exact location of this year's ISDE.

Since '06 some 10,000 troops have been deployed to patrol the streets of Morelia and other cities in the state of Michoacán. Why? Because the state is a major producer of crystal meth, marijuana and heroin. Put simply the gangs that produce, traffic and profit from the sale of illegal drugs don't like the fact that Mexico's President Felipe Calderon is carrying out a nationwide war on drugs. The cartels' way of demoralising the public and in turn creating pressure on the government to stop the battle is to kill. And not just rival gang members.

"They have crossed a line from recklessly endangering civilians in their attacks on law enforcement officials and rival gangs to deliberately targeting innocent men, women and children," states US Ambassador Tony Garza.

It's hard to imagine such lawless behaviour, especially for us that live within the relative security of the European Union. Shoot-outs between rival gangs is something that happens on the news or in films – it's almost impossible to accept what is being reported as being true. But it is true. Morelia in Mexico is a very dangerous place to be.

Killings between rival drug gangs is one thing but the fact that innocent civilians are now deliberately being targeted is something very different. And the fact that the ISDE might get tangled up in this fight against crime is unacceptable.

So who is responsible for making the call as to whether this year's six days should run? One thing's for sure – the organisers and the Mexican Motorcycle Federation are unlikely to be the ones to suggest things shouldn't go ahead.

In a statement on the official six days website, under the heading 'security', the organisers admit that they are working on plans for 'specific and special surveillance in the paddock, special tests, time checks, hotels and during the nations' parade in downtown Morelia'.

Surely, if a general security plan – and we're not talking about arrangements to keep overly enthusiastic school kids out of the paddock – needs to be implemented to make sure things run smoothly then the event's a non-starter. Surely. Using words like 'can run smoothly' instead of 'will run smoothly', the organisers' brief statement doesn't exactly exude confidence. Adding a footnote that the event is 'sporting' and not 'political' is all well and good but do the organisers really think drug gangs care?

If doing what they are doing is because they want to destabilise President Felipe Calderon's plans to rid the country of drugs then killing innocent non-national civilians could well be their next step. Pressure to stop the crackdown from overseas governments will directly help the drug cartels' cause.

Security has to be the FIM's number one priority but sadly the security isn't the only 'issue' surrounding this year's six days. An import/export 'tax' has been imposed, which will cost all teams thousands of pounds. So not only will it cost teams a small fortune to get themselves and their equipment to Mexico for an event at which their safety could well be at risk, they will also have to cough up more money to get the bikes from customs to the race itself. With riders and team managers over a barrel I wouldn't be surprised if 'incorrect' paperwork results in the handing over of additional cash payments.

It might just be a case of the ISDE being in the wrong place at the wrong time and that were it any other year an event run in Mexico would be without security fears. But that's not the case. Mexico's problems have been increasing steadily for several years – a little more homework from the FIM would have told them that appointing such a prestigious event to a troubled country was a bad idea.

But the FIM, reluctant to either reduce the number of competitors in the ISDE or opt for a plan to run the event once every three years, have left themselves with little choice but to consider awarding the event to less than ideal applicants. Truth is countries certainly aren't tripping over themselves to run the event anymore as most don't have the required access to large enough areas of land.

Mexico's hands aren't tied by land access issues, instead they're tied by something much more serious – drug crime. Knowing what we know is it right to still expect people to participate in this year's six days?



SOKI MOTO-SPORT BILLET ALUMINIUM CLUTCH COVER

How long does it take to change a clutch on your dirt bike? The answer should be around 20 to 30 minutes max unless you own something older than the Shed of Dread or one of those fangled new Honda CRF150 four-strokes. Yup, it seems Honda have not played a blinder with their schoolie class weapon as to access the clutch you have to drain the water and the oil, remove the kickstart and brake pedal before you can even think about taking off the cover. Bad times...

Luckily there's an awesome new product that brings the one-fiddy kicking and screaming into the 21st Century and it's this Soki Moto-Sport two-piece billet clutch cover. Stronger than stock and better at dissipating heat, this T-6 aircraft grade aluminium cover is a worthy addition to any serious racer's 150F.

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Fox's new collection of tees and hats and stuff are ideal for folk who like to look cool while they strut about out in the hot summer sun. With a range so big and varied there's no way it's possible to show or describe it all here so the best thing to do is hit up your local dealer or head online to www.foxeurop.com

Price: Tees £20 Snapback hat £15 Flexfit hat £18
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FREESTYLE XTREME

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Europe's biggest stockist of both Fox Racing and One Industries casual wear, Freestyle Xtreme are going Monster mad this month with a whole heap of scorching hot new products all emblazoned all over with the Monster Energy brand.

First up is this Fox Racing RC-replica casual wear combo that's actually rarer than rocking horse poo so if you want some then you're gonna have to be quick. The range comprises of the tee and hat (pictured) plus there's also a zip-front hoody which rocks our socks.

Over in One Industries territory we have this rather splendid Monster hoody and Flexfit cap that both feature the ubiquitous Monster claw – again very cool. So check 'em all out online at www.freestylextreme.com just as soon as you can.

Price: Fox RC-replica tee £24.99
 Fox RC-replica cap £24.99
 One Industries stormy hoody £59.99
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KIT CASH!

etnies I'm writing to you to have a kind of mini rant! I would like to start by thanking you for another great mag. Yet I would also like to tell you of my disgust at all the high prices for MX gear these days. I mean it was okay when I was little and my dad bought everything for me. But now I'm growing out of XL kids and into small adults at the age of 15 and being forced to buy the gear myself.

I am amazed at the high prices for MX gear – I mean it's not as if these top brands such as Fox, Thor, Alpinestars and so on don't make enough money. Yet they feel the need to charge me £80 plus for a pair of riding pants? Just the other week I happily walked into my local bike shop hoping to find some bargains yet was even more horrified to find that second-hand gear was being priced at around £60!

So DBR, any freebies would be most appreciated as I am a bit short of money at the moment and would like to continue my riding career! I take a small adult jersey and wear 30/31 inch pants...

Daniel, Stockport

Yep, racing kit is expensive Daniel but most of the manufacturers do produce a budget range so you should be able to get cool looking jeans, jersey and gloves for under £100 – like anything these days it pays to shop around. And we'd love to help with a set of our stinky kit but we're bigger boned lads in the DBR office so anything we sent you'd have to wait to grow into – another 10 years should do it. Saying that, we can help you out with a new pair of Etnies...

WOUNDED!

I'm 15 and I have recently fallen off my CR125 and broken my arm. I am stuck at home very bored and I have nothing to do. Please could you send me some stickers or free hats/t-shirts etc if you have any so I have something to do. Thank you very much – I'll look forward to checking the post!

Toby, Ipswich

Hey Toby, sorry to hear you're missing in action – we'll send you some posters off Tiff and Cassie to give you something to do (they may also help with your physio)....

STRAPPED FOR CASH

Right then, where do I start? Well I'll start by saying how peed off I get that so many people write in giving some spiel about races and stuff or how their bikes have been stolen. I know some are genuine but I suspect some are made up because the writer's trying to win a cool pair of Etnies.

With me it's the case that I had to sell my MX

bike to pay bills and be able to afford the house that I wanted to move into. I read this magazine each month and it reminds me of how good people have it and it makes me sad. Boo hoo me! But if it wasn't for you guys doing all of this I wouldn't be the MX rider I still am today even if I haven't got a bike so thanks DBR...

Jason, via email

Sorry to hear that mate – being forced to sell your bike sucks – but as you obviously realise racing is a luxury, having a roof over your is a necessity. Hang in there Jason – as long as you're a racer at heart then in our book you're still a racer...

CAREER ADVICE

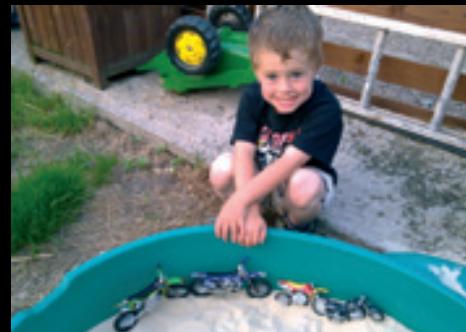
My partner is an off-road bike fanatic. He follows supercross and has ridden MX, enduro and now rides trials. When he is not riding he is either watching an event on TV or following results and the latest action on the internet (he is lucky I am so tolerant and now a follower through association).

He also has an excellent memory – he could tell you who has won world/British championships for a ridiculous amount of years, where they won and how the championship played out that particular year. He can recall inch by inch the layout of old motocross tracks and trials sections he has ridden (I just nod and smile as he is asking if I remember section four where there was an adverse camber which went behind the oak tree before a big hillclimb out).

On top of this he is an excellent writer and can take pieces of research and pull together a coherent and interesting article that covers all key points without 'rambling' and losing the plot. I know the combination of these attributes (his passion and skill) would make him an excellent off-road bike article writer. Based on this could you give me advice on how he could get into this career field.

Sadie, via email

Hi Sadie, thanks for your email! Well it sounds like he has the right skill-set but it's a very competitive field so there are very few full-time 'staff' jobs out there and lots of very good contributors chasing not many freelance opportunities. What's he like with a camera? Being able to back up good stories with great images is a big advantage because it's so much easier for lazy-ass editors to commission complete articles from one person. Your bloke's best bet is to pull together an article on a subject he finds interesting, get some shots to illustrate it and then send it across to us – at the very least we can certainly offer some constructive criticism.



WHITBY WOOT WOOT #1!

I just thought I'd send an email to express my feelings on how good the Red Bull Pro Nationals were at Whitby. I've just got back from there after a weekend watching the guys and would like to congratulate them all. The racing was fast and furious and we can't wait to go see the next one.

The racing was top class and the FMX guys were a pleasure to watch. I'd also like to congratulate the Whitby club which did a cracking job with the track and a special thanks to the main man himself Gordon Crockard and his mechanic (I think) who removed the bike stand from my son's toy bike we had just bought him – they saved me hours.

Marty, Derby

PS I've attached a pic of my son and his new prized possession.

We were at Whitby too and couldn't agree more – what a mega weekend with great weather, great racing and a great atmosphere plus a great track. In short, it was great! And good on ya Gordy (and possibly his limping wrench Leo) for being prepared to roll up his sleeves and get greasy – the man's old-school to the core! We bet he'd even have put fresh rubber on your lad's bike if you'd asked...

WHITBY WOOT WOOT #2!

Just got back from an awesome weekend of motocross and felt inspired to bash out a quick email to you guys to go public with my love for the Red Bull boys at Whitby!

Great racing both days, a rocking band on Saturday night, backflipping freestyle and plenty of beers with the boys to help numb the pain of a flat air mattress when I finally got back to my tent made the journey up from Lincoln well worthwhile. So top marks to all the riders who put on such a good show and to the MCF for making it all happen.

This is what motocross is all about for me – who needs a GP at a crappy man-made track when we've got the Pro Nationals? Not me!

Graham, via email



GOT SOMETHING TO SAY?

WELL HERE'S WHERE YOU SHOULD BE SAYING IT...

Write to Rant at the usual address or email us at rant@dirtbikerider.co.uk

All letters/emails must be accompanied by a full address. Oh and please don't send emails all in capitals. Cheers!

LETTERS WIN PRIZES

Write to Rant, get your letter published and you'll win a one-litre trigger bottle of marvellous bike cleaning fluid Muc-Off. And if we rate your letter highly enough you'll also receive our star prize – this month a pair of Etnies Chrome 02 shoes.





SUPERTONY!

Little Mikey Alessi's struggling like a cat in a sack Stateside on KTM's new 350 but this side of the pond Tony Cairoli's controlling the MX1 world championship from the front. So is it the bike holding Alessi back or is it the rider? And is Tony just so frikin' fast he could win on a Blackpool seafront donkey or is the three-fiddy really the way forward? Next month we're off to the KTM factory where we'll be looking for answers to all these questions and many more...

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Brad in action at Duns – the defending MX1 champ reckons the #1 plate makes other riders more determined to beat him

ON THE ROPES?

LIKE THE PLOT FROM ONE OF HIS FAVOURITE ROCKY MOVIES, PEOPLE'S CHAMPION BRAD ANDERSON WAS CONTROLLING THE MAXXIS MX1 DIVISION UNTIL A HARD-HITTING RUSSIAN CAME ON THE SCENE. BUT CAN LIFE IMITATE ART? CAN THE PAR HOMES HONDA RIDER SOAK UP THE PUNISHMENT AND PUNCH HIS WAY BACK TO THE TITLE?

Words by Sean Lawless Photos by Sutty

Last season Brad Anderson came of age – and, at the ripe old age of 28, it was about bloody time too. From his days wringing the neck off a screaming 125 through to winning multiple British four-stroke titles, Brad's always been ferociously fast and provided non-stop entertainment with his throttle-pinning, all-action style. But up until 2009 a major championship had eluded him.

Last March, after the Maxxis season-opener at Canada Heights, Brad left Kent for the long drive back up to his home in Tow Law, County Durham, with the series leader's red plate. And the PAR Homes Honda rider, newly signed from Swift Suzuki, simply refused to relinquish it for the rest of the season.

At the start of the 2010 season he picked up where he left off with overall victory at the opening Maxxis round at Little Silver. It was a scrappy performance from the defending champ

but the red plate – now bearing the #1 rather than his regular #60 – remained firmly bolted to his 450F. Business as usual for one of the most popular riders in the UK? Actually, no...

The truth is that since that narrow victory – by a single point from CAS Honda's Gareth Swanepoel and just two ahead of Swanie's new team-mate Evgeny Bobryshev – the consistency that characterised Brad's 2009 title-winning season has been missing. Last year Brad only slipped below third in two races with a 4-4 card at Langrish – where German factory KTM rider Max Nagl recorded a double wildcard win – and tied up the title with a round to spare. But so far this season, admittedly with an extra race at each round, he's already fallen short of the top three on six separate occasions and he currently sits fourth in the table, 46 points behind the pace-setting Russian Bobryshev. >>

"I've put a little bit of pressure on myself" >>



to try and retain my championship," admits Brad when we catch up with him at the Silverstone round of the Red Bull Pro Nationals. "At the first meeting I was pushing that hard I made loads of mistakes – I ended up coming out with the overall but I wasn't happy with my race results."

Since that opening round the Maxxis series has visited Mallory, Duns and Lyng but despite Brad showing shades of his 2009 form at the fourth round in Norfolk where he chased Bobryshev every inch of the way in the opening race it's clear something's not quite right in the Anderson camp.

"I should have kept my #60 because I've been running #1 and everyone's just gunning for me with the #1 on. If I go past someone it just gives them the urge to try and race me all the time which makes it harder for me to get past them or to beat them.

"Everything just come together last year.

I think I was on a good bike with PAR Homes Honda. The tracks were very good last year compared to this year and I've just seemed to struggle a bit this year compared to last year, getting out the start and such with the tracks being hard to pass.

"And the new format doesn't suit me. I think I'm a lot fitter than 20 minutes but a lot of the riders who aren't can still race these 20-minute races where you don't really get tired. And the tracks at the moment seem as though they're not as hard as what they have been so you don't really get tired in the 20 minutes."

Of course, the three riders currently sitting above Brad in the standings are all GP riders who are conditioned for longer motos. Swordy's been out of world championship action as he struggles to overcome the energy-sapping Epstein-Barr virus but for the CAS Honda duo the Maxxis series actually represents a drop

in standard which surely must put Brad at a serious disadvantage?

"I'm racing here at the Red Bull this weekend but it's no comparison to the GPs but we can't afford to do the GPs so we've just got to try and forget about that. I know Bobryshev and Swanepoel are picking their speed up more and more by doing the GPs but that's just the way it is – all I can try and do is win the races in England.

"The GPs will cost me a grand-and-a-half to two grand to get my licence and all my entries and stuff like that where here I could come away with maybe £700 which all helps the bank account. I'd like to do GPs again but they have to give you start money or prize money or something so you get something for doing it other than a team sponsoring you. In Britain you get prize money, some places you get start money and it just helps with everything because



THE
ES?

Brad knows he's got a big job ahead if he's to retain his Maxxis British title





Ando went 1-1 at the Foxhill round of the Red Bull Pro Nationals – it's a performance he wants to repeat there in the Maxxis series

fuel is going up all the time. It's ridiculous.

"It's a sad state that the British champion isn't doing GPs but I think times are hard at the moment. I won it at the wrong time and if I'd won it two years ago I think it would've been a lot better. And I don't think it's going to pick up much either and teams are going to struggle a lot more and that's why I'm looking to do new things. Maybe go to Australia next year or do something else just to get away and see the world really."

Top-flight motocross has changed beyond almost all recognition since Youthstream took over promotion of the world championship. The GP series has become elitist to the point that Brad's talent alone isn't enough – serious financial backing is needed to progress to the world stage. One positive effect has been that the UK now has enough big meetings to make racing solely on these shores pretty lucrative for a top British pro. But the flipside is that MX riders are by and large thrill seekers and racing the same tracks just simply isn't doing it for Brad.

"I am a bit disillusioned. The tracks aren't that good at the moment, we do the same tracks day in and day out and I just want to try something new. I think a lot of the riders over here are getting a bit sick."

Brad got a taste of another MX lifestyle when he flew out to Australia in May to hook up with his old sparring partner Billy MacKenzie. Billy, of course, has been contesting the Aussie Nats this season after becoming disillusioned with racing in the UK and Europe. After spending his entire career racing the same tracks and more or less the same people it's understandable why Billy needed to do something drastic to avoid burn-out and it seems Brad's thinking along the same lines.

"Everyone's very helpful in Australia and anything you want they'll try and do for you or get for you. I didn't get prize money while I was out there but I got paid to go out there and do the things so I gave it a shot and hopefully it might bring bigger things for next year like going out there and racing with my old pal Billy. We'll just have to wait and see on that. I didn't really make that much contacts, they just seen how I rode and it brought a little interest from the teams I think. As long as the money's there I'll ride anything."

NO JOKE!

UNFUNNY ONE-LINERS...

Brad has been critical of this season's Maxxis tracks with a lack of different lines making passing difficult.

"The first one at Little Silver was more like a four-stroke track than a British championship track. Duns was a bit unlucky how it turned out. The track layout's good but it seemed as though it was one-line and everyone was going quick and it was so hard to pass. I think I rode better when it was wet because it had a few more lines so I don't know if they didn't wet it enough or something. They should have something like Brampton back – maybe they will if they don't run it here [Silverstone]."

"Mallory was the same – one fast line and you couldn't really pass. Deep ruts which I thought the digger would have went in and moved some of them but they just left them there. Which would have given them more lines if the ruts were moved because everyone was using just one good one because all the other ones were just too big. Which made it too difficult to pass when you had a bad start."

"So all-in-all I'd say Lyng's been the best one so far and then we've got Foxhill next which is probably a real good one too. That's old school. I know my way around there so it's only my own fault if I lose there against Bobryshev. Bobryshev I've heard's more of a sand rider which he did ride well at Lyng so hopefully we can play it my way at Foxhill."

"At the Red Bull Pro National there I had two race wins and I wasn't expecting to win because it's Swordy's track really. But I went there and passed him in both and I was shocked with myself to be honest because I felt smooth and it just clicked. So hopefully I can do that at the Maxxis because I'll be pumped if I do."



"Billy was excited I was over there but when I beat him in the Nationals he wasn't too pleased that I come over and won him because he said he'd invited us over and I shouldn't have really done that! But the next week we had a good battle and he had us down twice which we had a bit of a doolally about but it's all right – it's racing isn't it. Like old times."

"It seems as though I lost a bit of my fight before I went to Australia, then I went to Australia and it seems as though I got it back. But today's a different day again. I'm trying my b*****s off and getting nowhere and it's hard to pass out there and it puts a little bit of a downer on us to be honest but hopefully I can keep my head up high."

There's a popular saying that goes something along the lines of it's harder to defend a title than to win one – something the recently-turned 29-year-old is finding out first-hand this season. Over the years his fans have come to expect a 'no surrender' attitude from the uncompromising North Easterner so it's a surprise to speak to him and discover he's openly contemplating failing to retain his Maxxis MX1 crown.

"At the moment I wouldn't say I've given up but Bobryshev is going really well and we need something to happen to him like a

>>



NO MORE GLUE

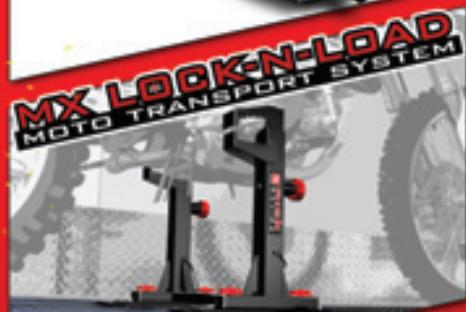
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mechanical failure or something like that. I am still trying to retain it but second's my goal at the moment other than win it. I'm close on Swordy, six points away from Swanie and I think I'm 45 from Bobryshev so there's big ifs and buts but it still could happen."

On the track Brad may have a reputation for balls-out attack but this aggressive approach doesn't mean he can't ride with his brain and at Lyng a combination of speed and tactics almost paid off in a straight one-on-one fight with the CAS Honda rider.

"The thing is just to try and beat him week in and week out. I was a bit unlucky at Lyng where a back-marker got in my way on the last lap and Bobryshev got the drive, well, I reckon I would have won that one. In the first couple of laps Bobryshev's so quick he breaks everyone and then he's already gone and it's harder for us boys to catch him back up.

"In the first one he was putting fast laps in and so was I and I kept with him, pressurised him and I don't think he liked that. If I can keep that up it will be interesting. Definitely."

profile



Brad has struggled with his starts this season – although he nails this holeshot at Silverstone



ON THE ROPES?



Brad's better half Hayley



THANKS FOLKS!

PEOPLE THAT MAKE BRAD GLAD...

"I'd like to thank Paul and Claire at PAR Homes Honda and my wife Hayley for putting up with us when I have some bad races. And thanks to all me sponsors for helping us out – without them it couldn't happen."



SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER!

WHY DIRT 3-2-1'S GONNA BE ROCKIN'...

If you're the kind of cat who likes staying in on a Saturday night and watching the X-Factor then you may remember the name Katy Bullock because she's the gorgeous northern lass who appeared on the hit ITV series wearing a one-piece lycra trials suit a wee while back. But if you missed that momentous occasion then all you need to know about Katy at this moment is that she's clever, she's witty, she's a brunette and she's pretty plus she has the voice of an angel.

More importantly though she's also making a special appearance at Dirt 3-2-1 on Saturday night with her band to perform some brand-new tracks from her upcoming album. So as soon as all the exciting on-track action is done for the night Katy's gonna pick up the mic and keep the party vibe alive with what we're expecting to be a top-notch performance. And if you like a drink with your live music you'll be doubly glad to know that the Red Bull bar will be serving hooch – both alcoholic and non – for as long as Katy keeps on keeping on...



★ WITH NO BRITISH GP THIS SUMMER HOW ABOUT PACKING UP YOUR PIMPMOBILE AND HEADING TO ARMTHORPE IN SOUTH YORKSHIRE ON THE WEEKEND OF JULY 31/AUGUST 1 TO CHECK OUT DIRT 3-2-1 – A TWO-DAY, FOUR-EVENT DIRT-BIKING BEHEMOTH THAT'S SET TO ROCK YOUR FREAKING SOCKS...

We're obviously as gutted as anyone that there'll be no British motocross grand prix this summer as it's always a real highlight on the off-road calendar and a great chance to hook up with old friends, have a bit of a party and watch some sweet bar-banging race action.

But while its non-occurrence is a definite bummer don't despair too much because there's still a golden opportunity for British off-road fans to converge on one corking venue and enjoy an awesome adrenaline-fuelled, full-throttle, mid-summer weekend (**July 31/August 1**) that's packed out with off-road race action.

Okay, so Dirt 3-2-1 isn't a full-on GP and it doesn't pretend to be either but with a ton of top riders being lined up to compete – including world champion Taddy 'the daddy' Blazusiak, Dougie Lampkin, British MX champ Brad Anderson, James Noble, Gordon Crockard, Paul Edmondson, Bryan MacKenzie, Tom Sagar, Nathan Parker and a fair few more – plus a bunch of other stuff going off over the weekend in many ways it's a million times better. It also comes with the added bonus that because we don't have to line Youthstream's pockets it will only cost race fans and racers around a fraction of the price to attend.

As well as being cheap as chips the other thing that makes Dirt 3-2-1 so special is the fact it's a fully hands-on affair that's absolutely wide open to everybody. That means whether you want to just come and watch the pro racers or try MX for the first time in a safe and controlled environment with the Suzuki Test Ride team then we've got your back. Or if you've got your own bike and you want to bring it for a blast around the FatCat practice track or take part in any of the four race events that are being held over the weekend then you too are also very welcome to join us.

As well as all the on-track action there's a whole heap of other stuff going on like trials demos by 12-time world champion Dougie Lampkin, the trade village where you're sure to pick up a bargain and an off-road expo where a bunch of new bikes including the 2011 KTM's will be on show. A live band will be rocking the party on Saturday night plus there's going to be a bouncy castle for the kids and enough food and drinks on offer to sink a battleship or two – basically everything you need for a great weekend.

Admission to Dirt 3-2-1 for spectators costs just £5 per day while accompanied children aged 12 or under get in for free – as do wearers of the Dirt 3-2-1 festival wristband that came free with this month's magazine (now there's a good deal)! For more details about Dirt 3-2-1 keep on reading or head online to www.dirt321.co.uk



© Jason Bellinger

It was all smiles last year – despite Mother Nature's best attempts to chuck a spanner in the works



Competition at Dirt 3-2-1 2010 kicks off on Saturday morning with a Sprint Enduro – a brand-new event for this year. Following a similar format to the British Enduro Sprint Championship, riders will race an enduro-style special test against the clock between six to eight times throughout the day with all the times then being added together to create an overall score.

The Sprint Enduro circuit is expected to be between eight to 10 minutes long and laid out mostly on open parkland with a small amount of woodland going and some man-made sand whoops and a dirt mountain thrown in to really mix things up. With a few top-level motocross stars promising to give the sprint enduro a shot it should make for an interesting day of competition as the newbies try to take on the established off-road stars at their own game.



Starting just after the sprint enduro comes to a close, the Dirt TT is a one-off charity race event that will bring together some of the UK's leading superbike and road race stars – headed by the winner of all five of this year's TT races Ian Hutchinson – and put them against the clock around the Dirt 3-2-1 sprint enduro circuit for a four-lap timed off-road epic. While these Tarmac terrorists are used to rattling around the IOM TT course at speeds close to 200mph they'll be challenged in a much different way at FatCat Motoparc with some spectacular sand whoops, tricky tree roots and the dirt mountain of doom all set to put these celebrity racers through their paces. Miss it at your peril!



While practice and qualification for the youth and amateur supercross racers will have been rocking the race arena throughout the whole of super Saturday the SX Main Event kicks off at 4pm with a super-slick full race programme for the pro class supported by the equally exciting youth and clubman Main Events. Whether you're racing yourself or simply stood watching all the action from the sidelines this is one evening of racing you definitely don't want to miss.



Probably the highlight of last year's Dirt 3-2-1 was the Saturday evening endurocross which pitched a plethora of off-road stars into the mix and pulled out a surprise champion. With an entry including 12-time world trials champion Dougie Lampkin, multi-British trials champ Graham Jarvis, extreme enduro specialist Paul Bolton and the wildest of the wild men Andy Cripps the Main Event was actually won by the relatively unknown in comparison Yorkshirer Ben Hemingway.

Hemmo's back to defend his title in 2010 but doesn't expect to have things easy as there'll be an even tougher crowd of riders to beat around the awesome FatCat endurocross circuit that'll undoubtedly throw up some surprises itself. Expect a night of thrills and spills as some of the world's best endurocross riders battle it out for cash prizes!



Sponsored by www.dirtbikebitz.com, Sunday at Dirt 3-2-1 is all about motocross racing for all youth and adult groups on the redesigned, revamped and rebuilt FatCat race circuit. For the youth and amateurs this means a traditional three-moto format to find an overall winner for each group while the pro class will battle it out over two longer motos that'll not only test their speed and on-track agility but their stamina too. With some of Britain's leading youth and pro racers set to do battle Sunday's all set to be another sweet-ass day!



With a £1000 winner-takes-all cash prize up for grabs we're expecting the pro class King of Dirt title to be a hard-fought affair as stars from each of the four disciplines strive to be the overall top points scorer over the course of the weekend. To bolster their chances of taking the King of Dirt title riders will have to crossover to events that they might not usually be seen racing in and that's sure to make for some interesting and entertaining on-track action. King of Dirt awards will also be up for grabs in the youth and amateur classes with overall champions crowned at the end of a fun and exciting weekend of race action.

Ben Hemingway sweeps past Joe Deakin on his way to Endurocross glory at last year's Dirt 3-2-1



© Andy Wiley

WANNA RACE? TEAR UP THE TRACK AT DIRT 3-2-1...

With well-prepared tracks ready to tear up, a plethora of prize money and trophies up for grabs and the promise of masses of event coverage in both DBR and T+MX News, Dirt 3-2-1 is an event that racers really should not miss out on.

By bringing in the MC Federation as event partners the organisation of all the on-track activity is guaranteed to be super slick – just like Jeff Perrett's bounce – and comes with the added benefit of transponder timing and all the glitz and glamour you'd normally associate with a grand prix or Red Bull Pro National!

There's no need for riders to provide a marshal, weekend camping is free, one-event MCF licences and transponder hire will both be available for a

nominal fee plus there'll be goodie bags and a Dirt 3-2-1 medal issued to each and every youth competitor who races both days.

All potential racers are reminded that enquiries and entries should be directed towards the MC Federation. Everybody is welcome so log on to www.mcfederation.com or call 01865 343666 during normal office hours.

Race events and classes available at Dirt 3-2-1. Sprint Enduro and Endurocross – Adult Clubman, Adult Pro/Expert. Supercross – Autos, 65cc, 85cc SW, 85cc BW, Rookies (Youth Open), Adult Clubman, Adult Pro/Expert. Motocross – Autos, 65cc, 85cc SW, 85cc BW, Rookies (Youth Open), Adult Novice, Adult Clubman, Adult Pro/Expert.

WRISTBAND WOES?

WHAT TO DO IF YOUR FREE FESTIVAL WRISTBAND DON'T FIT...

You've probably already noticed that there's a free weekend wristband to Dirt 3-2-1 worth £10 attached to the front of this magazine that'll get you into the event as a spectator on both days and also entitle you to camp overnight if you wish. But some of you might be thinking 'mine's broken – it's way too tight and I'll never get my hand in there' but don't despair, just follow these simple instructions to wristband righteousness...

STEP 1

Firmly take hold of the two open ends of your Dirt 3-2-1 festival wristband then grip the white plastic toggle between your thumb and forefinger and pull it away from your other hand until the toggle comes free from the fabric part of the wristband.

STEP 2

Put the ends of the wristband together and fold them in two. Now pick up the white toggle and thread the folded ends of the wristband into the rounded end of the toggle and push it along approximately a centimetre so the toggle straddles the FatCat Motoparc and MCF

logos. Don't worry if you push it on too far because you can return to step one and start all over again.

STEP 3

Your Dirt 3-2-1 festival wristband is now ready to put onto your wrist but be careful because as soon as it's fitted this wristband ain't coming off in a hurry so we recommend that you only tighten the toggle to lock the wristband in place when you're sure you want to keep it on. Also remember not to tighten the toggle right up to your wrist because wrists need room to breathe too and there's nowt less attractive than a purple hand. When your Dirt 3-2-1 festival wristband is securely fitted, jump in a vehicle of your choice and drive to FatCat Motoparc on the weekend of July 31/August 1...

NOTE – Dirt 3-2-1 festival wristbands that have been cut, damaged or tampered with in any other way will not admit the wearer to Dirt 3-2-1 (at the discretion of the security staff on the gate). Don't bother trying to photocopy one and sticking that to your wrist either because we really ain't that dumb!



The sprint enduro is a first for Dirt 3-2-1 this year



Supercross is a sure-fire crowd pleaser – and we've got loads!

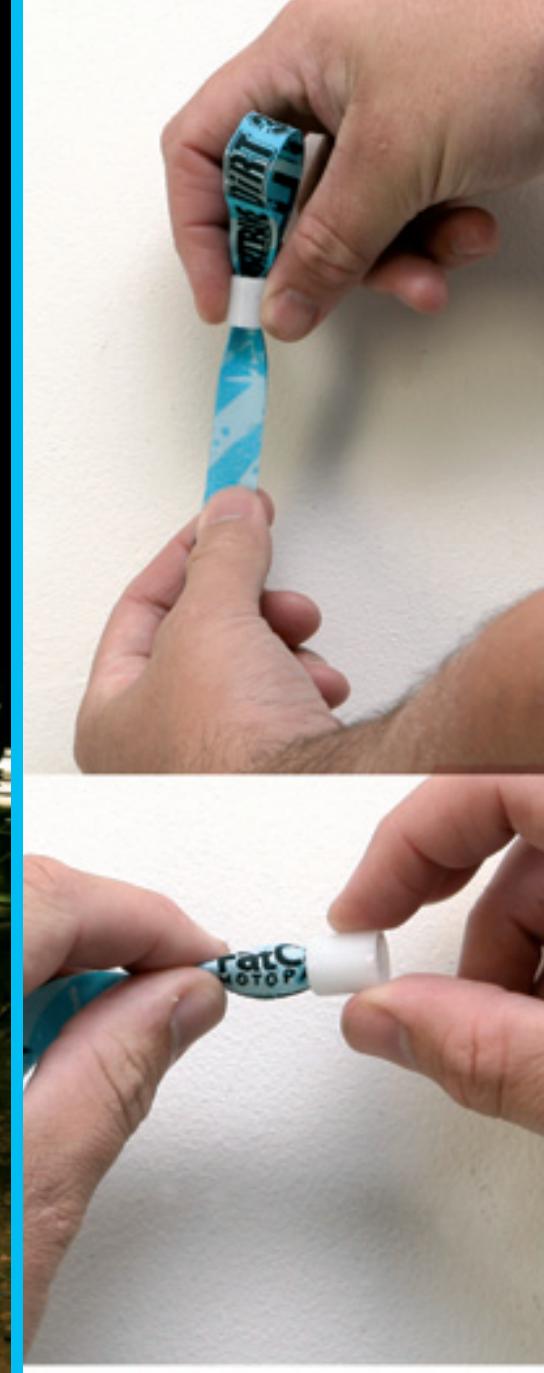
© Chris Hudson

LOCATION! LOCATION!

DIRT 3-2-1'S OVER HERE FOOLS...

If you're not already a FatCat Motoparc regular and you're not sure where it is then don't worry about a thing because the Dirt 3-2-1 off-road family fun weekend is simple as pie to find. For Sat Nav users it's as easy as typing DN3 3EH into your TomTom or Garmin and then doing what the nice voice tells you to but if you're a little more old-school like us and like to find your way to places by using a map and compass then it's really not that much harder either because FatCat's situated just 30 seconds from Junction 4 of the M18 – that's the motorway that runs north/south between the M1 and the M62 just East of Doncaster in sunny South Yorkshire.

So let's say you're lead-footing it up the M18 in a northerly direction on Saturday July 31 or Sunday August 1 and you want to visit Dirt 3-2-1. Well, you simply have to pull off the M18 at Junction 4 – remember the mirror, signal, manoeuvre mantra – and then take your third exit onto Holmewood Lane. If you're going southbound then it's even simpler because all you need to do is take your first left straight off the motorway and then you're directly headed to dirt bike heaven aka FatCat Motoparc. Got it? Sweet!



Fitting your Dirt 3-2-1 festival wristband is as easy as pie



MCF





KX250F

DBR TESTED



MONEYSHOT!

FOR 2011 KAWASAKI'S TWO-FIDDY THUMPER FOLLOWS ITS BIG BROTHER'S LEAD AND COMES COMPLETE WITH FUEL INJECTION – AND THE BOFFINS FROM KOBE HAVE GOT IT BANG ON THE MONEY...

Words by Jeff Perrett Photos by Redeye

When it comes to winning races Kawasaki have done pretty well for themselves it has to be said. Some could – and no doubt will – argue that it's mostly down to the talent of Mitch Payton at Pro Circuit for not only building a bike that is so often the strongest in the MX2/Lites class but also because of his ability to keep finding rough diamonds and polishing them up into champions.

Here in Europe though Kawasaki haven't been able to dominate the MX2 class like they do on the other side of the Atlantic. Only two men – fast Frenchies Mickael Maschio and Christophe Pourcel – have managed to break either KTM or Antonio Cairoli's grip on the class over the last decade. Of course, when it comes to racing at that level the equipment is often far from what you can buy and a world away from what comes on a stock machine, contrary to the production rule.

However, the R&D that goes into professional racing is filtered down to the production bikes that we buy and this is clearly the case here. Kawasaki decided to introduce the fuel injection on the KX450F with great effect, making a good bike even better. They've now repeated that with the 2011 KX250F.

This year's KX250F was a success as far as I'm concerned and like for all manufacturers there's always a concern when you take something good and make big fundamental changes to try and improve it. I've been lucky enough to actually be involved with the testing and development for Kawasaki down the years as Ryan Voase and myself were involved with the introduction of the KX450F back in 2006 and I can say with confidence that the work that goes into the project is a relentless march. The durability test we had to endure was nearly enough to put me off riding a motocross bike forever – the bike passed the test with flying colours, the same couldn't be said for us riders on the other hand!

I can honestly say that in the last decade alone due to technology moving so fast no manufacturers really make a bad motorcycle anymore so to get that little edge must be even harder for them all. I think more than ever it really is down to personal preference when choosing what bike to ride rather than going on technical information alone.

On the flight back from Italy after testing this bike, when I wasn't feeling completely out of my nut and delirious from the humidity we rode in, I started to really assess the bike in my mind. The first thought that came into my head was 'I wish that bloody kid would stop crying' followed by 'if I was an air steward I'd get annoyed that nobody watches my safety demonstration' but after that I

started to think about the fuel injection (FI). It really has revolutionised racing to the point that if you don't have it you're going to be left behind. So you better get with the programme.

Looking back on the day I realised I rode round the Gallarate track and never once did the bike bog, even in the humidity we were dealing with. It just eliminates any doubt in the throttle response and replaces it with confidence allowing you to tackle anything on the track. So the introduction of FI on the KX250F has definitely made it a bike that's easier to ride – but is it as fast as this year's model?

The answer? Yes! There's an argument that by getting rid of the carburettor it might not be as quick and lose that bottom and mid-range grunt – especially if you take into consideration that they also had to make it quieter – but they've managed to maintain the power. According to our teacher Mr Steve Guttridge in our presentation 'lesson' the new 250 will get you to the first corner, on average, 0.8 metres ahead of the 2010 model according to tests. Well, he's bound to say that isn't he?

Thing is, I think he's right – teachers usually are aren't they? I tried several starts on the new bike and although I never had a 2010 bike to compare them with I have to say the new bike did feel quicker but I think that was down to the throttle response off the snap and through the gear changes more than the motor itself. This thing is as sharp as a tack and with good reason.

Kawasaki haven't just thrown the FI on and run with this year's motor, they've worked on over-rev to go with the quick response and I tell you what, they've done it well. You really can rev the nadgers out of this bike (not that you need to) and it will take more abuse than a masochistic banker in a Soho cellar. The power keeps churning out right at the very top – it doesn't fade out, it just revs and revs until you think 'oh yeah, I better change gear now!' Of course, you shouldn't wait to be reminded to change gear and there is an optimum point in the power curve to shift but if you're a bit of a serial rev raver then you're going to like this one.

No doubt about it, the power curve on this bike is a pleasure. Up the long drags on the hillside circuit I pulled tall gears, I let it scream in lower ones, rode with the throttle wide open, half closed, shut it off, opened it again – you name it, I tried to get the bike to labour but it just never did, not once. I was impressed with that. I then tried several laps without using the clutch and as the circuit started to dry and become more hard-packed with less loam to get good traction it certainly wasn't a disadvantage. I mean why give the bike an explosive shot of power out of the turns when it doesn't need one? >>

Fuel injection makes Kawasaki's 2011 KX250F so much easier to ride, eliminating all traces of bogging for confidence-inspiring performance

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KX250F SPECS

Capacity: 249cc
Bore and stroke: 77mm x 53.6mm
Transmission: Five-speed
Fuel tank capacity: 7.2 litres
Front suspension: Showa USD SFF 47mm
Rear suspension: Uni-Trak
Front brake: 250mm disc
Rear brake: 240mm disc
Seat height: 945mm
Wheelbase: 1475mm
Ground clearance: 330mm
Dry weight: 105.7kg

The FI will no doubt take all the plaudits but my impression is that the combined efforts of all the engine mods are equally responsible for this brilliant, fast and responsive power. The new piston, cylinder ratios and intake ducting all sync up and work as a team, unlike the England football squad. The piston has a new crown revised to suit chamfering in the squish area and that goes a long way in producing the over-rev, it also has an additional and reinforced rib and shorter skirt.

The intake camshaft has a revised sprocket and shaft arrangement to suit the FI with a valve lift from 8.7mm to 9.3 and stronger springs which also help it rev to the moon. There's a new spark plug too which drops 1.4mm deeper in the chamber for even more oomph and improved efficiency and also compensates for the drop in mid-range torque that comes from a change to fuel injection. The cylinder height is reduced to 36.3mm from 36.5mm to suit the new piston and there's a higher compression ratio which is now 13.5:1 compared to the previous 13.2:1.

The header pipe is 30mm longer to suit the new motor and the noise police and it clearly works for both. It all works.

The new silencer has pinched cut outs in the chambers that direct the gases straight in the glass wool packing to keep the bike within the 115db regulations so effectively the bike is even 'greener' when it comes to keeping those environmentalists happy!

Kawasaki have fine-tuned the chassis to good effect and the bike definitely turns tighter than it did before due to the fork offset being reduced from 23.5 to 22.5mm. They've also set about giving it a little bit more lateral flex which gives better rear wheel traction and better tractability so you hit a line with more confidence and I have to say that's what it felt like. I felt supremely confident on this bike and felt like I could put it anywhere I wanted on the track and that's even taking into consideration my only real criticism of the 2011 KX250F – the forks.

I'll sum them up in as little words as possible – 'too soft'. There you go, it's that's simple.

Kawasaki have made a major change in this department by switching to Showa's separate function fork (SFF), the first mass production bike to do so and I think it's a definite work in progress. It's not a disaster by any stretch – it's just a little disappointing that they aren't quite in sync with what is otherwise a great bike.

If you haven't got a clue what a separate function fork is let me explain. It's pretty simple really – the clue is in the name. The left fork houses the damping assembly and the right fork the spring. According to Kawasaki and Showa this configuration offers smooth action, firm damping and easier, better adjustment and it does – the only problem is that from a starting point it's a little too soft in my opinion. Kawasaki do offer a stiffer spring in the spares catalogue though and once I'd asked the technicians to put that solitary spring in the right fork the improvement was clear. It was a completely different bike.

So in actual fact it's not a bad thing. By a simple spare part it then opens up this bike >>

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Round 5
25 July
Fosbells, Swindon
MX1 / MX2 / MX2Y

Round 6
15 August
Farleigh Castle
MX1 / MX2 / Vets

Round 7
29 August
Silverstone
MX1 / MX2 / MX2Y

Round 8
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The only fault Jeff could find was that the new Showa separate function forks are a tad on the soft side which made for some hard landings



to a wide range of riders. Okay, if you're a half-decent club rider or semi pro you're going to have to buy a spring but in reality do you ever leave your bike in stock trim anyway? I'd guess not.

For the novices among you I've got a feeling you'll absolutely love the handling as much as the smooth, responsive power. No question the forks are plush and the movement is smooth thanks to the new system and Kashima coating on the inside of the fork legs and titanium coating on the sliders. Preload adjustment is simple – because the damper assembly is removed from the right fork it frees up space for a preload adjuster making it easier to set the preload and get the front height more in sync with the rear. On the more conventional fork that would mean stripping the forks and the use of specialist tools.

The new SFF also improves the balance and offsets the previous unbalanced weight of the brake caliper and disc on the left side. I know it's not really a big thing but the adjusters look all factory too with the blue alumite finish. A little bit

of bling is always good provided it's not too much and the bike doesn't look as colourful as a Christmas tree.

The rear shock has new damping settings to work with the front and I'm happy to say they aren't as soft as the front end but there's ample dual compression adjustability just like the forks. The rear shock linkage mounts are below the swingarm which offers better tuning. The bike tracks well at the rear and gives you good drive out of the corners when on the gas. Like I said, the only real negative was that the front wanted to push through while turning like you were rolling a tyre slightly but once we put the harder spring in that solved that problem. If we had more time and I wasn't so bloody unfit I've got no doubt we'd have had the front end and rear working in harmony when it comes to balance by the end of the day.

Everything else about this bike I liked (well apart from the seat foam going soft really quickly). The ergonomics and riding position suited me great, I always felt I was sat in the right position and shifting my ever increasing

bodyweight from front to rear was a breeze and the 2011 model seems to have a slimmer feel where the seat meets the rad shrouds. The brakes were razor sharp and now have a new petal design disc and the gearbox, clutch and controls were all smooth and precise.

All said and done the 2011 bike is an improvement on this year's model but I couldn't help but feel a little frustrated by the forks. They just took the edge off it a little. They were plush but I felt too many sharp-edged bumps directly through my wrists and forearms and bottomed the bike out too many times in a lap. Other than that and few minor gripes like the seat foam and maybe going up one tooth sprocket on the rear to capitalise on that sharp response and the over-rev available I've got to say I'd quite happily have a 2011 KX250F in the garage to pull out for a blast whenever possible.

It's a fun bike to ride, it's a fast bike to race. For a starting point for Mitch Payton to build yet another championship winning bike it's a good one, that's for sure.

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ER...

GRR?

HUH?!
IS THAT
ALL YOU
GOT!?

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WIMP.
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GOIN'
OUTSIDE.

IT'S TIME
TO FEEL THE
HEAT.

CLOSE YOUR
EYES, AND
GIMME
YOUR
HAND.

SQ
UE
L
C
H!

UGH!
DIRTY
DOG!

ROCK ROCK ROCK

PARP! PARP! PARP!

HMM...

ATM

HARDY...
CAN YOU
GET SOME
CASH OUT
FOR ME?

UM... ER... OH...
STAMMER... UM
BEEP.
BEEP.
BEEP.

COME ON
COME ON!

YOU
OLD
GIT!

COOL
IT...

LET'S CROSS
THE ROAD...

ZOOM!

WHITE
VAN
B@ST@RD!

'ERE...
CALM
DOWN,
HARDY.
I GOT
YER A
NICE
BIG
COFFEE.

LATER

TRY
THAT ONE

OH OH!
QUICK!
I NEED
A
TOILET!

BACK INSIDE

OKAY.
GOT
A
RACE
FACE
FOR
ME
YET?

see the



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Weston Beach Race
WBR10

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Organiser: RHL Activities Ltd

Venue: Weston Sea Front

Entry declaration:

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- I / we further declare that I am / we are physically and mentally fit to take part in the event and I am / we are competent to do so.
- I / we confirm that I / we understand the nature and type of event we are entering and its inherent risks and agree to accept the same notwithstanding that such risks

may involve negligence on the part of the organisers or officials.

- I / we confirm that the machine(s) as described below which I / we compete on shall be suitable and proper for the purpose.
- I / we confirm that if any part of the event takes place on a public highway, the machine(s) described below shall be insured as required by the Road Traffic Acts, or equivalent legislation, and that it / they will comply with

the regulations in respect thereof.

- I / we agree that I am / we are required to register our arrival by "signing on" at the designated place not less than 30 minutes prior to commencement of my/our practice or first competition, whichever occurs first.
- I / we enclose the entry fee of: £..... if you were in the adult solo last year, please put your race number in the box

Acknowledgement of the risks of motorsport:

I / we understand that by taking part in this event I / we are exposed to a risk of death, becoming permanently disabled or suffering some other serious injury and I / we acknowledge that even in the event that negligence on the part of the promoter, the organising club, ORPA, the venue owner, or any individual carrying out duties on their behalf were to be a contributory cause of any serious injury I / we may suffer, the

dominant cause of any serious injury will always be my / our voluntary decision to take part in a high risk activity. If the event is cancelled or otherwise changed for reasons that are beyond RHL Activities Ltd reasonable control including, but without limitation, compliance with any law or governmental order, accident, rule or restrictions, adverse weather, fire, disease, war or terrorist activity, commotion, acts of God, strikes

or other industrial action, breakdown of plant, machinery or any failure of gas, water service, electricity or similar supplies, then RHL Activities Ltd shall in such circumstances have no liability to the entrant. The commencement of racing is deemed as started as soon as the start gate is opened. I consent to details of any injuries I may suffer at this event being passed to the Medics and the Clerk of the Course.

I / we have read the above together with the associated Rider Entry information and acknowledge that my / our participation in motorsport is entirely at my / our own risk and are subject to the terms and conditions of **RHL Activities Ltd**.

RIDER INFORMATION (ALL FIELDS MUST BE COMPLETED)

Transponder No:

Surname: Forename: DOB:

Address:

..... Postcode: Tel:

Email: (Completion of this speeds up application)

Signature: ORPA Licence No:

2ND RIDER/PASSENGER (To be completed for Q2-2 Man Quad and Side Car Only)

Surname: Forename: DOB:

Address:

Postcode: Tel:

Email:

Signature: ORPA Licence No:

By signing this application form the competitors/parent/guardian accept they have read and understood the terms and conditions of entry as laid out in the accompanying supplementary regulations pages 1 – 3 of this application pack

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THIS WAY UP!

MASTERING STEEP CLIMBS WITH THE CROCK STAR

WORDS BY **GORDON CROCKARD** PHOTOS BY **SUTTY**

With three British Open titles and four GP wins to his name, Gordon Crockard is a bona fide motocross legend – and now he's sharing his riding secrets with DBR readers. Every month the Crock Star will run through an essential technique for everyone's racing repertoire – this month he's using a steep climb to demonstrate the importance of throttle control and body positioning. And when you've read and digested his fifth lesson hook up to www.dirtbikerider.com for a video demo of GC's other techniques...



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"This Spanish extreme hillclimb is actually much steeper and tougher than the sequence of photos makes it appear. The climate means the terrain has a dry crust on the surface which, once you break though it, gives way to a fairly hard and slippery base.

"I found this hill to have a play on by accident as I was practising one corner section on the track and needed a short cut to make a small loop. I have ridden lots of diverse trails and I find going 'off piste' like this can teach you quite a bit of skill and control techniques.

"The main element that requires attention on a steep climb like this is to get your body position and also the judgement of your throttle application correct. They are both affected by each other and to learn an understanding of this fact is what this exercise will teach you. The same principle applies to the take-off to a jump. Think of how a freestyle like Travis Pastrana negotiates a back flip on a

motocross bike - he has his bodyweight at the extreme rear of the bike on take-off and has the throttle pretty much fully open. These two actions matched at the same time make the bike loop out so dramatically it completes a full aerial rotation.

"So...the point is that you control the vertical angle of the bike with your bodyweight position and equally with your throttle application. This matters on jumps the most and can be taught and practised on a hillclimb of steep degrees. You must have your weight more towards the front of the bike the steeper the climb is. As you can see in the photo the beginning of the climb is very steep then it levels out a tad and then returns to getting progressively steeper as I reach the summit.

"The steeper the hill then the more I have my shoulders over the handlebars. This is to keep the front wheel from rising off the ground and disabling me from being able to

steer. Look closely and you'll notice that there are not clouds of roost and dust blowing out from the rear tyre - I am using first gear and merely applying light throttle to try and hold traction. Too hard on the throttle on a climb as steep as this and you'll struggle to stop the front wheel lifting up, making it hard to steer and increasing the chances of a loop out.

"I ride the hill with a resting index finger guarding the clutch lever. This is in preparation for a recovery procedure in the event of a wheelie getting out of control or if I lose traction and spin to a complete stop. You have to be ready for the bike coming to a halt and be able to rescue getting stuck halfway up the hill.

"The worst case scenario is tumbling back down the hill you're trying to get up. Not a cool thing for your confidence or for the look of your bike after it bounces down over the rocks and nasties you've passed on your way up!"



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A POOR RELATION?

THIS MONTH JEFFRO MAKES HIS WAY TO THE MOTOGP AND THE RED BULL PRO NATIONALS AT SILVERSTONE AND IT GETS HIM PONDERING THE QUESTION – JUST HOW DO ROAD RACING AND MOTOCROSS COMPARE TO EACH OTHER?

Words by Jeff Perrett Photos by Sutty and Nuno Laranjeira

I love watching MotoGP. The racing is usually amazing and the promo girls even hotter, arguably to the point that they're one of the main reasons I tune in. It's the two-wheeled version of F1 and rightly so. It has glamour and glitz and attracts mass amounts of corporate money with a huge TV global audience – but it still ain't a stich on motocross.

Motocross doesn't have that kind of money floating around and I doubt it ever will. It certainly doesn't have the glamorous appeal and the leggy models walking around with skirts so short they need two hair styles and, to be honest, to a certain degree I hope it never will (although the leggy models wouldn't go amiss!). Motocross isn't about that. It's fundamentally about a group of mates getting together on a weekend and doing a motorsport that is accessible to the guy and gal on the street, the common people that are the backbone of this country.

These days whenever I have to explain motocross to the uneducated I usually describe it as 'an exciting caravaner's club' because, when you actually stop to think about it, it is! We all load up our motorhomes or vans – be they blinging ones that probably needed a remortgage to buy or dogged-out, beat up ones where the bodywork is held together by stickers over the top of stuffed newspaper and filler – and away we go in search of our little weekend utopia. It's our escape from the

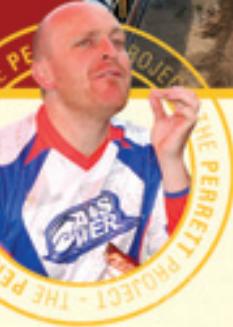
monotonous, mundane nine-to-five existence. Of course, virtually everyone has a hobby and lives for the weekend but I honestly believe there's something about motocross that unites people with a mutual respect that other sports rarely match.

Motocross is what it is and the way I see it will never be like Formula 1 or MotoGP for numerous reasons. Firstly there's the accessibility of motocross. Whether it's just a practice track, a local club race, AMA National or FIM MXGP, you can access the riders and stars and get close to the action – that's a huge part of what makes our sport different, particularly in the professional 'game'. Motocross is right there and in your face, most forms of road bike racing are not.

Obviously, the speeds and resulting safety concerns involved with Tarmac racing play their part in this but when you get to the high end of road racing it's not just about that, you have to be member of a more exclusive club if you wish to get close to your heroes – either that or pay your way for expensive, so-called VIP treatment. Of course it's that very scenario that appeals to some, for others it's more about social status. Personally speaking, I hate all that. In my eyes everyone is equal, no matter colour or creed and nobody is better or worse than me for the number of zeros on their bank balance. Maybe it's just the way I've been brought up, I don't know?

I'm not for one second suggesting that >>





the road bike fraternity are class snobs who think they are better because that's far from the truth but due to the very nature of the sport and the constraints of the venues it's very hard to get access to your heroes and see them up close and personal so it stands to reason it's more exclusive. That's why Valentino Rossi is so bloody good. It's not just his undoubted talent that makes him popular – it's also down to his brilliant personality and commercial savvy. He reaches out and bridges that gap over the security fences and crash barriers to the fans, the gap that motocross doesn't have.

Go to a motocross GP and the chances are you'll see his countryman Antonio Cairoli ride right past you on his scooter and if you flag him down and ask him he'll probably stop for an autograph and chat but for The Doctor it's a little bit harder to attend to your needs. That's why I really hope accessibility to a motocross paddock doesn't go the same way as Moto GP and F1.

Of course, our sport is a niche one – admittedly it's a pretty big niche – and in my eyes the mother of all action sports. But is it ready to become more mainstream? Does it even need to? In my opinion this is where the whole AMA versus MXGPs constant river of

debate flows from, it's the source. I for one can certainly see both sides of the coin.

I admire Youthstream for trying to pick motocross up and drive it into people's homes throughout Europe but at the same time I'm concerned this is happening at the expense of the true motocross fan.

Youthstream are trying to sex motocross up and make it more appealing to major corporate brands and only time will tell if they'll succeed. I certainly don't know more than any of you but will that level of investment actually help the sport grow and encourage more people into buying motocross bikes and going racing? I know some MX folk don't even want that – they like our sport being a cool, niche alternative.

On the flipside the AMA Nationals appear to still have those more traditional motocross values we all know and love but don't quite seem to be as good as they were. Are they losing their way and slowly being put out to grass by supercross? Is it even just simply down to global recession? Of course, America does have the advantage of motorsport in general being more popular plus a vast country more open to the joys of off-road activity.

To promote the sport of motocross they took

it into the city and called it supercross, leaving the true spirit of motocross to fend for itself. And now a new generation of riders opt to bypass motocross altogether, using as role models some of the more experienced pros who are more than happy to be the star of a motorised rock n' roll show in the huge stadiums and take the summer off. That's a big carrot dangling that's hard to resist.

Until we can start filling the huge sports stadia around the rest of the continent has European motocross got a limit, a threshold we can't break through? Again, I don't know the answers and I'm playing devil's advocate here – again, only time will have the answers.

One thing is for sure though, motocross is becoming more popular with the masses and hopefully that will start to reflect at grassroots level. In fact, the whole action sports world is growing as a recent feature on the BBC website suggests. Satellite TV and the internet have changed everything, that much is true. I've personally seen the difference. When I was a pro racer and in my so-called 'prime' a decade ago, motocross was alien to more people than it is now. If I was out – let's say in a pub for argument's sake (because to be fair it's

>>



MotoGP tatty is a good reason to tune in

REASAY!

WHY JONNY'S HEART IS IN MX >>

One person I was keen to get the opinion of at Silverstone was Jonathan Rea. The Ulsterman was a successful youth motocrosser before switching over to mix it up with the boys from the black stuff where he's now earning a good living racing for the Hannspree Ten Kate Honda team in WSB.

"I got into road racing because of the lack of opportunities in motocross but I always wanted to be a professional motocrosser!" says an enthusiastic Jonny as we sit down between Red Bull Pro National motos. "I found in motocross it took a lot more than just being a talented rider to get that far. I come from a middle class family and there wasn't much of an opportunity to drop out of school and take that risk but there was an opportunity with Red Bull and their rookie programme to go short circuit racing so I went for it. Red Bull then worked with Honda and I haven't looked back since."

"But if you asked me know if I'd rather be James Stewart or Valentino Rossi I'd rather be James Stewart! I'd maybe be a few million dollars behind in the bank but I think it's a cooler lifestyle."

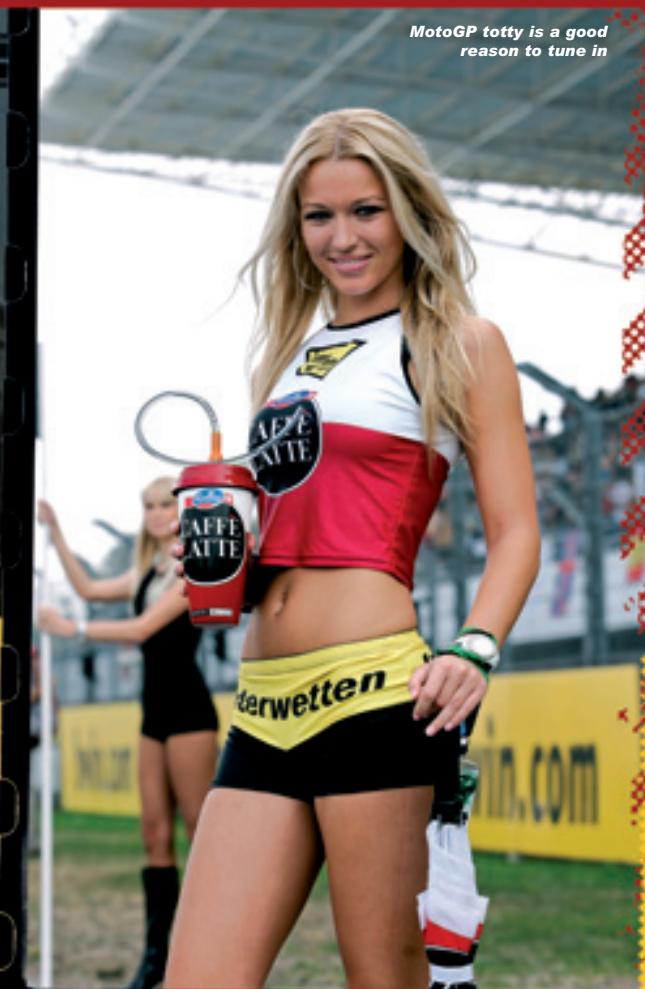
"Don't get me wrong, road racing is great. I'm 23 years old I have a house in Ireland, a house in the Isle of Man and I'm travelling around the world with my job and getting paid well for it but I wouldn't have had that if I had stayed in motocross. I'm lucky and got a chance to break into it because it's even more expensive than motocross. It's much harder to earn a living in motocross and that's a shame because it's so good and takes so much dedication and that should be rewarded. The guys in motocross I used to race against are scraping by making a living. As a sport motocross is cooler but as for being a job and trying to make it your living the two don't compare."

"I'm still involved with motocross and have my own team helping David Goosen and that's to keep my roots because I love it. In the wintertime I work on putting the team together and ride myself. Last year the week before the WSB race at Portimao I raced the Ulster motocross championship at Desertmartin and had three second places. If something went wrong and I injured myself I'd think 'what an asshole for doing it' but I just can't help myself. I remember going bar to bar with Gordy and Tommy Merton last year when maybe I shouldn't have because I knew it would be fun."

"My dad used to road race but that never really influenced me. I just knew I had more of a chance where I was at making a living out of road racing. I check out all the motocross results on the way home from a Superbike race. So many road bike racers follow motocross. I went to the opening AMA National this year and Leon Camier, Leon Haslam and Cal Crutchlow were there too and we all ride motocross in the winter."

"I'm pretty into it and I know what's going on and as much as I don't agree with all of what they are doing with the MXGP's I also do because they are now in a position to invite the MD of Sony, or Apple, whoever, along where you're going to struggle – unless you are a cutting edge brand like Red Bull – to bring people to a dirt field because effectively that's what it is and how it should remain. I admire anyone who tries to improve situations. I think everyone is doing their best to improve the sport but I don't think you'll get everyone pulling together, just like you won't with politics. That's just life."

"I like what the MCF and Red Bull have done here though and with the Pro National series with the look and feel and bringing the kids in to race alongside the pros, that's a smart move. They're trying to make it more appealing without trying to lose the things that make the sport so good. It will then snowball and if the bigger companies are involved then it's easier to sell to TV, once you have that more major companies should look to invest and that's got to be a good thing no matter which way you look at it."



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nearer the truth) – and someone asked me what I did, I'd tell them I race motocross. "Oh yeah, I've seen that, that's where you ride over cars and through skips isn't it?" was a common response to which I wanted to calmly put down my JD and Coke, place both hands on their shoulders and drive my head forward into theirs with frustration. At least now more often than not they have an understanding and I can continue to sip on my drink without biting the glass.

With the modern media motocross is becoming more corporate and tied up in the action sports genre. You only have to take a look at the amount of energy drink companies investing in the sport – there seems to be a new one each week. They fit the extreme and brutal sport we choose to play, not because of the game itself but because of the lifestyle and that's where road racing, motor racing, rallying and motocross are all coming together more than they ever have.

Red Bull have not one but two Formula 1 teams, Monster Energy are now sporting their logo on Schumacher's and Rosberg's lids and yet, to my knowledge, neither brand have snapped up a football club in financial ruin. Is that because football is so common and

mainstream it's not such an alternative lifestyle choice that suits their brand?

Then there's the fashion of the action sports world that motocross sits in. You can usually identify someone who's into motocross, skateboarding or BMX by the clothes they wear. It seems like every company involved in our industry has to make a clothing line of some description otherwise their company just will not be creditable. For the best part the way 'our folk' dress is like a tribal tattoo in modern society. I find Formula 1 and MotoGP fans harder to identify on the streets, probably due to the sport having a much more widespread global appeal – again that highlights to me the importance of motocross remaining niche.

That's not to say it can't be more professional and promoted better but I honestly believe there is a limit. The MC Federation worked tirelessly with Silverstone for over four years to get a motocross track at the home of British motor racing. Now you wouldn't want every motocross track to be built on a flat piece of real estate – and the circuit certainly isn't a Glen Helen or Hawkstone Park – but it did enough to show what the sport can offer and it will get better and better as Silverstone invest, so let's be thankful of that and another circuit



The stars are certainly less accessible in MotoGP



MXGP still allows the fans to get up close and personal



© Gold & Goose/Red Bull Photofiles



gained as opposed to one closed. And who knows? Maybe those fans that can't afford to go road racing will take up motocross as an alternative and judging by the feedback that both Silverstone and the MCF received after the event that could well be the case.

While I was at Silverstone what really came to the forefront of my mind was just how many road bike racers started in motocross. After discussions with some of them what surprised me even more is their true love of it. What actually drove them away from pursuing a pro MX career was realising it would be harder to make a living out of it. This is an argument that MX should become more corporate and mainstream. It's the chicken and egg scenario though. Until the demand for motocross bikes grows worldwide manufacturers are not going to invest into the sport like they do road racing.

It's all relative. Going MotoGP racing, Superbikes and the like comes down to marketing to sell road bikes for everyday use. GP or AMA motocross is pretty much to sell bikes for recreation only. You cannot buy a F1 car but if you have the money you'll buy into the manufacturer's brand and buy one of their supercars, even more so if you have a small penis and equally small libido...

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KX250F	2009
KX250F	2010
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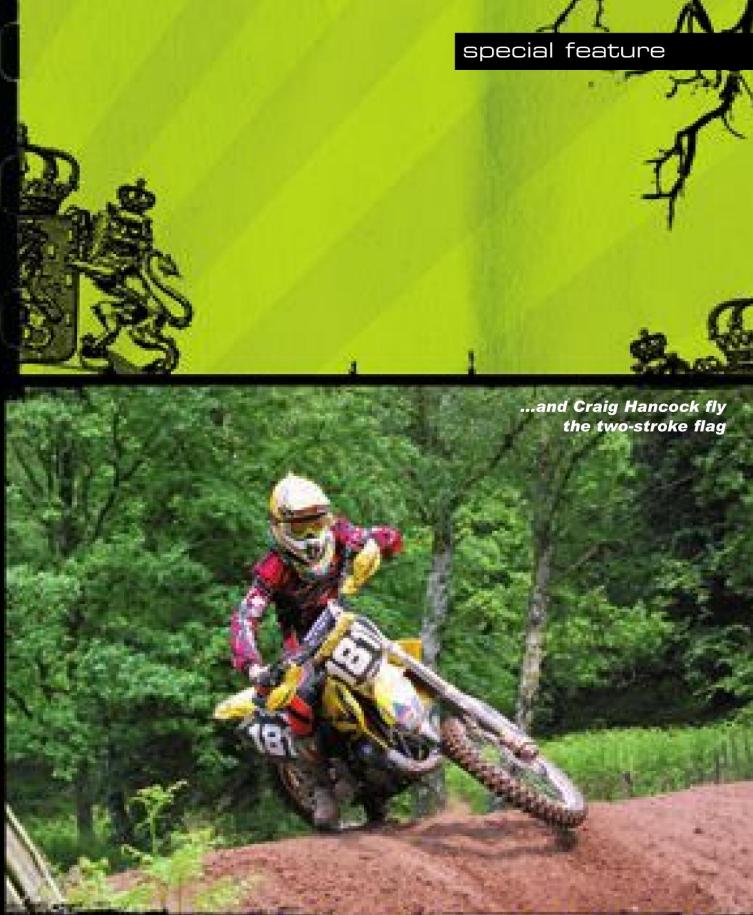
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PRE-MIX FIX!

DBR'S REGULAR WEBSITE CONTRIBUTOR – AND SELF-CONFESSED LOVER OF ALL THINGS TWO-STROKE – GETS A LUMP IN HIS PANTS AT HAWKSTONE PARK...

Words and photos by Pondo

It's been a fascinating journey watching the two-stroke fight-back. In the UK the vanguard was led by Chris Barker and the brilliant DEP championship. Chris built a fantastic series out of nothing but when the MCF took it on and built it up by taking it to a higher, more professional level there was arguably an impact on the club racer who wanted a simple day's racing.

There's no doubt that MCF, by running it alongside the Red Bull Pro Nationals and the Elite Youth Cup, have raised the profile of the Fuchs-Silkolene 2 Stroke British Championship but it meant that a lot of the riders who made up the five full gates at the start of 2008 missed out on a spot in 2009 and more so for 2010 when the limit was set at one 125 gate and one Open gate. Some riders, rightly or wrongly, felt like the series had shifted away from being a hardcore two-stroke championship and become a sideline support series to a mainly four-stroke championship. It's the most prestigious two-stroke title in the UK but the focus has maybe shifted from where it was back when Chris kicked the whole thing off.

But for the clubman rider who wants his no-frills pre-mix fix, another series has pulled up to the gate for 2010. Cumbria Twinshock's Darren Hudson decided to use his club's

MD Racing/UFO National Vets series as a platform on which to build a new two-stroke championship and as a diehard fan of two-stroke racing I went along to the second round of the series at the sublime Hawkstone Park.

I wasn't entirely sure what to expect but I had what ranks as one of the most enjoyable weekend's racing I think I've ever been to – it's hard to pinpoint what made it so good. The weather was great and the racing was brilliant but it was the atmosphere that made it special, even with a lack of spectators – it was almost like everyone was there with the sole purpose of having a good time and the racing was almost incidental. That's not to say that that it wasn't taken seriously – it was and there were some seriously quick riders and everyone was on full noise all the way through the field. But you could wander through the paddock and chat to anyone and when the racing finished for the day on Saturday everyone was tipping back a few, whether around a barbecue in the pits or dancing to the rock band in the beer tent. Not to put the rose tinted spectacles on or anything but it was just like the good old days...

In the 125 class, 2009 Fuchs-Silkolene 125 Junior champion Matthew Thomas was on blistering form, unbeaten over five motos on the weekend with a field that included (on Saturday,

at least) former AMCA Superclass champion Charlie Hollis. Hollis took a brace of seconds in the opening motos but went missing in action on Sunday and Matthew Wild took advantage to take second overall ahead of Alex Finnegan, Josh Quinlan and Ash Crossley.

The 250s saw Alex Rach win in imperious form with Richard Chin heading a frantic battle for second ahead of Lewis Farrow, Kevin Green and Craig Marsden while 500 victory went to Justin Penty ahead of Steve Ward and Sean Hodgson. The 500 class was grouped together with the Twinshock class which was won by Rach, this time on an air-cooled Maico of circa 1981 vintage, which made for a fascinating match-up. Penty on his aluminium-framed CR500 was plenty quick but he was outrun by Rach on what was clearly a very well sorted Maico. Who says you need all the latest kit?

But while the on-track action was of the typically frenetic two-stroke type (and even the four-stroke races were good, though it pains my heart to admit it), the atmosphere off track was a revelation – relaxed and happy, it was all about turning up and just racing a great track.

I'll leave the final words to Dan Grove and his Facebook post. "Blinder of a weekend on the scrammy!" he wrote – I couldn't have put it better myself...

BUD N' GIANTS!

IT'S BEEN A SHOCKING START TO THE SEASON FOR BUD RACING WITH BROKEN BONES AND BELOW-PAR PERFORMANCES KEEPING THEM OUT OF THE SPOTLIGHT BUT THE TIGHT-KNIT FIGHTING FRENCHIES AIN'T READY TO ROLL OVER JUST YET...

Words and photos by Nuno Laranjeira

Many riders will describe their team as 'a family' and the Rockstar/Bud Racing team was built on the same concept – although Stephane and Sébastien Dasse have taken it a step further. In fact, such is the family atmosphere within the French team that they all live within 10 minutes of each other.

Highly regarded in the parts development business for over 15 years providing support to teams and riders all over the world with their own brand products, in 2007 the Dasse brothers decided to form their own team as a platform for a then pretty much unknown rider by the name of Marvin Musquin. Bud Racing's world championship debut happened the following year but in unfortunate style as Australian hope Brendon Harrison and '07 EMX2 runner-up Khounith Vongsana both got injured, compromising the team's results.

In 2009 Bud Racing inherited the Molson contract and in the package got Gautier Paulin along with precious support from Kawasaki Europe and Japan. To add to an already good set-up David Vuillemin signed on to race MX1 and no less than former world 250cc champion Jacky Vimond came aboard as team trainer.

The '09 version of the team enjoyed a successful season with Paulin initially leading the world MX2 series before slipping to third and Vuillemin winning the French Elite championship and 2010, on paper at least, looked even better. With energy drink Rockstar as title sponsor, Stephane and Sébastien secured the services of Greg Aranda in MX1, Nicolas Aubin in MX2 and 16-year-old rising French star Dylan Ferrandis in the new two-stroke EMX 125 championship. But 'on paper' and 'on track' are two vastly different things...

So far this season Aranda has broken his leg, an off-form Aubin was moved up to MX1 to try and revitalise his season and American amateur hotshot Michael Leib, brought in to fill Aubin's boots in the MX2 division, broke his arm on the very first day he rode Nico's bike....

We sat down with the main movers and shakers of this year's team collective so they could tell us a bit more about themselves and – more importantly – what they are doing to make Lady Luck come their way...

Gregory Aranda

MX1 >>

DBR: It's only June and already you are a strong candidate for unluckiest rider of the year...

GA: "I started the season by winning the first round of the French championship but at the second one in Pernes I crashed hard – not breaking any bones but I got an injury in my head and felt very dizzy for three weeks. I didn't practice during that time only coming back for the races and then I crashed in Mantova hurting my head again. I tried to come back two weeks later at the Portuguese GP and although I had good lap times the races weren't that good as I didn't feel strong. Then at the Spanish GP I broke my leg and I now have three months to recover. My head is fine though [laughs]!"

DBR: What made you favour Bud Racing over KRT to race a Kawasaki this year?

GA: "I didn't feel prepared to go on a team like KRT yet but I am young and I have the time. I prefer to work hard and only go on a factory team when I feel ready for it. Another big reason is that I can work with Jacky unlike last year when I was practising by myself. This team is very good to me, they're a family and they don't give me any pressure and that's essential to have a good season."

DBR: Do you want to follow the footsteps of other countrymen and go to the US? You showed at Anaheim 1 this year with a 13th in the Main Event that you have good SX skills...

GA: "Yeah, it's a dream for me. Maybe I'll go again to America next year to do some supercross races and prepare my season?"

DBR: What about your relationship with Aubin – you're great friends aren't you? Do you notice any change now that you're both in the same class?

GA: "Oh, he's a retard [laughs]! I live so close to him that I have to see his ugly face all week. It's really good that he's riding the 450 now. During practice we have very similar lap times, we'll just need some good starts and we're there at the front..."

team profile

Gregory Aranda – the team's sole MX1 rider at the start of the year – has suffered cruel luck so far with injuries



TURISMO DE
CAM

Stephane Dusse

TEAM BOSS >>

DBR: Where does the name Bud come from?

SD: "When I created the company Philippe Dartailh was Yves Demaria's mechanic and when they went to the USGP they baptised him 'Bud' because he was big like Bud Spencer [famous Italian actor] and drank a lot of Budweiser! Silly stuff, you know. When the company was created Philippe was the chief mechanic so we decided to call it Bud Racing because of him and also because it was an American name and easy to remember."

DBR: What's happening this year? It looks like a repeat of 2008 with almost every rider injured...

SD: "Ah, in 2008 we didn't have fast riders, this year we have them and it was just a bit of bad luck for Greg at the beginning of the season. During the winter Nicolas was very fast but when the races came something happened – he can't concentrate. So we talked about it and he agreed that the 450 could be good for him as a change. It will take him some time but he will come good in the end, he's getting better in every race. I feel that he's much better in his head, more confident, happier..."

DBR: Why import an American kid who hasn't even run in the Nationals yet instead of a French one as you have so much talent in France? Is this part of a business strategy concerning the American market?

SD: "The guys at Troy Lee told me that they knew of this kid and that he was only 18 years old. When we didn't have anyone to ride the 250 and went on the market we found that the level in Europe was not very high in the MX2 class so we couldn't find a rider. In France we have some good riders but they were too young to ride the MX2 bike and also I don't see any rider at Michael's level available in France at the moment."

"Jacky had seen him riding during the winter in the US and he told me good things about him also so we asked him to come and make some tests. I'm sure Michael can do some good results and surprise a lot of people. He's coming from the US amateur championships which for us is more interesting to work with. It's also good regarding the American market for Bud although in the last two years with the dollar going up things have not been good for us – but we weren't thinking about that when we invited him."

"We actually had one or two riders asking us to get on the team but my goal is not to have riders paying to be part of the team. I do a team because I have pleasure running it and I can develop my business and the technical parts of the bikes. I prefer to pay for some kid and watch him improving in the team, that's why we have a four-year contract with Ferrandis – I certainly don't want to make again what we call the 'Musquin mistake' [laughs]!"

DBR: Do you regret not picking up Musquin for 2008?

SD: "With Musquin we really had a good relationship but at the end of 2007 after finishing second in the European championship his father asked me to take Musquin's brother Michael. But I didn't think he had a good level for the GPs, I just wanted Marvin in the team so in the end we didn't reach an agreement and they left for NGS Honda..."

DBR: Why didn't you re-sign Paulin for a second year?

SD: "Gautier's contract with Kawasaki was going to end last year and because they had to start cutting on the budget if I wanted to keep him I had to put some more from my pocket. Paulin was the best Kawasaki rider and third in the championship and he had a pretty good salary, which is normal."

"Also, when the time came to renew his contract I couldn't promise him the bike he needed – because he's a heavy rider I had to give him a really good 250 in order to allow him to battle against the KTM's. We tested a lot with Gautier but I didn't have that bike ready when the time came so I told him to take the opportunity with Rinaldi while it was there for him. We actually made a big step on the development of the 250 by the end of the season but it was just too late..."

DBR: Why invest in a 125cc two-stroke rider and just how good is Ferrandis?

SD: "We have been working with Dylan since he was in the 85cc class. He's a very good kid, he's just a bit limited at the moment because he's very short and light but he won everything on an 85 – the French and European championships, Bercy... He has a lot of potential so we offered his parents, who don't have much money, to take care of everything about Dylan in a four-year contract which was a good deal for everyone."

DBR: What does Bud actually do?

SD: "We started the company in 1995 by giving assistance to the riders in the French MX championship as they didn't have anyone to prepare their bikes properly and this was being done in the US. We tried to buy parts from other companies and work with them but we were not finding exactly what we were looking for so we said that we should start making our own."

"With our own brand we develop racing parts – engine and suspension. We also import many brands for the French market and export our own brand all over the world."

"We have supported many good riders in France and in the world championship during the past years with the suspension and parts. We also helped Marvin Musquin since he was riding his 65cc because he lives very close to us and his father used to ride with me so we had been



with him for over 10 years. When he finished his 125 season we told him that we would create a team especially for his European MX2 season in 2007 with the support of Kawasaki France – that's how the team started."

DBR: What about your brother Sebastien, the suspension wizard?

SD: "He started with us in '95 also. He was riding the junior championship at the time but he had an awful crash in '98 and ended up in a wheelchair. He always worked on suspension – he started with Philippe [Dartailh] who was working on both suspension and engines for us at that time so he learned from him and began to focus only on the suspension since then. Philippe is still working with us but he's not coming to the races like before, he did many seasons before so now he just stays at home with his family."

DBR: How is the support coming from Kawasaki this year? Europe, France or from both?

SD: "We have firstly a very good support from France, then Europe and we also receive some special parts from Japan. Only technical parts come from Japan, budgets come from Europe and France. Our relationship with Kawasaki increased a lot this year. We received a large support from Kawasaki USA when we went to Glen Helen. We prepared the bikes there – new bikes, all the parts we needed, everything was excellent."

DBR: Would you contemplate a supercross season in the US then – something like Bud Racing US?

SD: "Why not? Everything can change now with the GPs beginning in May so I think that all of the MX market will change completely. We can be up there with our young French riders as their goal is to be in US SX so maybe something like the first six races of the American SX could be possible? I don't know. For now I find it very difficult to do them both properly as the season would be very long. But we'll see what the future brings..."

BUD
N' GU



After failing to find his form on a 250F Nicolas Aubin has moved into the MX1 class

Nicolas Aubin

'NEW' MX1 RIDER >>

DBR: What's happening with you this year? Is this a desperate measure to get a 'new' stronger Aubin?

NA: "I just felt really tired at the beginning of the season, everybody thinks that it's a mental problem or something but it's nothing like that. I even got my blood checked but they didn't find anything. I'm feeling a bit better now and I'm starting to ride like I should although I'm still far from the level I already had, I'm building it slowly."

DBR: Are you moving to the bigger class because you feel you can't beat the new kids? Is it the bike or are you just tired of it?

NA: "You know, if I'm feeling 100 per cent okay I can be a great rider in 250, I don't have any doubts about my capacities there and I'm conscious that it's really difficult to win in MX2 now with Musquin, Roczen and Herlings. I think my place is probably between fourth or sixth with Frossard, Horebeek or Osborne."

"I just lost the feeling of the bike and lost confidence after the winter practice because I felt so tired. There's nothing wrong with the bike, it's a bike for a top three or five although I don't feel we can beat the KTM's on every track. I think it's difficult to do that with a Japanese bike now. The 450 is not the bike I prefer but the team needed some results on the 250 and I wasn't getting any. Stephane told me that he was going to try

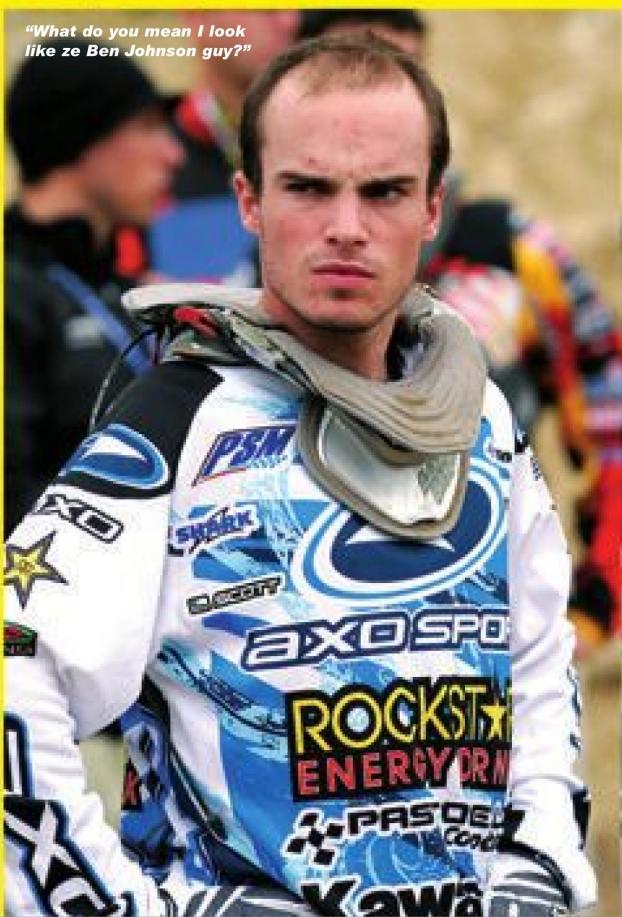
this American kid to see if things could change. I moved to the MX1 after the team's suggestion, it wasn't planned but I agreed. I had already raced the 450 two years ago in the French championship and I was beating POURCEL who was winning GPs at the time."

DBR: You're now fighting with Boog in the Elite class in France although you usually beat him in the past two years in the world MX2 and now he's making great results. Do you feel that you should have decided to go MX1 before the season started?

NA: "I think that the biggest difference between me and Boog is that he already wanted to pass to the MX1. He has a good style, he's smooth and he's been fast on the 450 for some years now, just like me. On the other hand, I still wanted to ride 250 because I still believed that I could win, that's why it's hard for me to accept this new strange feeling I have when I moved to MX1. I still look at the 250 riders practising and I can't help thinking I should be there..."

DBR: How comfortable are you racing against the big names of MX1?

NA: "I feel positive. I'm working every race to have the best results I can in MX1 and although I know that it's not easy to win a GP, I could win a moto. If I feel 100 per cent confident I can win on a fast track like Belpuig or Loket."



"What do you mean I look like ze Ben Johnson guy?"



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American hotshot
Michael Leib broke
his arm within laps of
getting on Aubin's bike

MICHAEL LEIB

FILL-IN MX2 RIDER >>

DBR: I bet you're not at your best level yet after that injury – was it too soon to come back?

ML: “In Spain I tried to just go out there and ride to see what I could do but it was very painful. I wanted to work through the pain and see what I could do – at least get a start. You know it was better for me to do that than just sitting on the couch watching time going by. I couldn't injure anything more by riding and actually riding was helping the healing process so we all decided on the team that I should go there with no pressure whatsoever. My contract is still going to go until the end of the season in Italy.”

DBR: What do your fellow Americans think of your transfer to the GPs?

ML: “A lot of people congratulated me – it's a big step to come out here all by myself. At home I was racing and living with my parents and I had my mechanic there also... For me this is just a good opportunity and I don't really care about what everyone thinks, most of them just wished me the best for coming here.”

DBR: Why do some Americans want to come here and race the Europeans while others just assume that they're all beatable and it's not worth the effort?

ML: “To be honest, before coming here I thought that maybe the level wasn't that good but when I got here and went to Portugal and saw Roczen, Herlings, Musquin and Osborne I realised that they're fast! They can even win in the States and I think that this year a lot of Americans are starting to see that. In Glen Helen a lot of people talked to me after the GP and commented that the Europeans were fast and capable.”

“I also think that you're going to see more and more people

respecting the world championship for what it is – a world series – and it's going to happen this year. By the end of the year some people will stop thinking that they can just come over here and beat all the Europeans, there's a lot of them out there that cannot win a world GP and they're going to be very surprised when they realise that.”

“I do want to say that I didn't think that I could come over here and win. I knew Europeans were fast, what I didn't know was who was who. I didn't know Roczen, Musquin, Frossard – I never go on the internet, I just usually live in my own little world and now that I'm here I don't know what is happening in the US. I just concentrate on what I'm doing.”

DBR: What differences are you finding between the US and Europe?

ML: “The food! Man, it's different! Manola is an amazing cook! Stephane's house has an apartment on the side so I'm living pretty much in his house and she takes good care of me. There's a really good vibe on the team, it's all positive and everyone plays a big part in their role. Everyone here helps the other, there's no-one only taking care of themselves. You really feel that you're part of a family.”

DBR: What about the differences between the Honda and Kawasaki?

ML: “Bud's bike is awesome! I don't have that much time on the bike to compare but the Honda I was riding at home was really dialled in. The first thing I noticed on the Kawasaki was that the suspension was immediately better – Sebastian works hard to get that right and, honestly, right off the bat he had it nailed for me so the bike handles pretty good...”

**BUD
N' GU**

Dylan Ferrandis

EMX 125cc RIDER >>

DBR: It's the first year for the two-stroke EMX 125 championship – how is being a part of it going to help you?

DF: "Obviously I feel it as a good opportunity because I get to ride on the same tracks as the MX2 and MX1 so I feel that I'm also part of the show. I've been riding for Bud for two years now but to be under the world championship team awning gives me much more visibility, the whole world can watch these races."

DBR: You won the youth class at Bercy – how cool was that?

DF: "It was a fabulous moment as Bercy is a big race with a huge crowd. I got to race with some of the best riders and showed them what I was capable of."

DBR: I bet you also want to go to the US...

DF: "Absolutely, riding motocross or supercross, I like both. I'm even having extra English classes with my teacher whose family is also involved in motocross so she knows my needs."

DBR: How about the bike?

DF: "They're building a new one for me – they've been adapting a lot of stuff on the bike to suit me. The engine is amazing, this bike is so fast! I just really need a good start and after that I believe I can win races."

DBR: Do you want to go to the MX2 class next year?

DF: "I want to but it will depend on what the team will decide, of course. I just made 16 years old so I could go..."

Anxious to avoid the 'Musquin mistake', Bud signed Dylan for four years



Dylan is learning from the master



BUD N' GUT



Former world champ Jacky Vimond plays a pivotal role in the team

Jacky Vimond

TEAM 'FIXER' >>

DBR: You signed as team coach and had success with Paulin and Vuillemin but this year you have additional responsibilities...

JV: "Sebastian and Stephane work so much during the week, they have a business to run so this year they asked me to supervise the team which includes checking on the mechanics, the riders, talking with journalists as well as organising the all the travelling with Manola who is in charge of our press and hospitality. This is on top of my weekly physical and technical training with the riders."

DBR: How is a typical 'Javim' (Vimond's nickname) practice week with the riders?

JV: "We all live very close to each other – we spend the season all together. Nicolas lives above the team's headquarters, Aranda just across the street, Michael three minutes from there and Dylan lives in the Dasses' parents house which is also near."

"I think this is the way to go when you invest in your riders – if the rider doesn't get the result but he's still working you trust him because you saw him during the week doing his job. If he's not there with you and he's not getting the results and you also don't know what he's been doing then you have trouble..."

"I have a programme for all of them but we don't practice at the same pace. For instance, when I'm practising with Michael we usually go at the same speed but Nicolas has his own rhythm. I don't give them a lot of hours in the gym like some guys who spend four hours working out. Dylan is not doing physical training at the moment because he's growing up and it was making some problems in his bones like we all had at this age."

DBR: Tell us about Dylan – another of Bud's 'discoveries'...

JV: "Ferrandis is a really good kid. We expect a lot from him. We've been supporting and investing in him – he's living with us and he's been away from his parents' home so it's tough at his age. We're preparing this kid step-by-step and not rushing him for MX2. If his rhythm is good we might think about it for next year. He's has a very small stature although I know he will be a good rider in the future."

MOUST ROB MEEK
PONDERS HIS HAT-TRICK
OF WESTON BEACH RACE
WINS WITH SON NATHAN
IN 1995



FAMILY TIES!

IF THERE WAS EVER ANY DOUBT THAT MOTOCROSS RUNS IN THE GENES, JACK CHECKS OUT THE FAMOUS NAMES IN THE RED BULL PRO NATIONALS WHICH IS POPULATED BY SONS – AND GRANDSONS – OF SOME REAL BLASTS FROM THE PAST...

Words and photos by Jack Burnicle

You won't remember me..." I looked up into a pair of blazing blue eyes, beneath a mop of silver hair, my mind flashing with faces from my misspent MX youth. Then it clicked. "Alan Clarke!"

One the most entertaining aspects of hosting an action-packed Red Bull Pro National round is how many children (and grandchildren!) of former motocrossers are out there racing.

Alan Clarke was a teak-tough Derbyshire miner who rode a Husqvarna hard in the 1970s against guys like Roger Harvey and Stuart Nunn. His daughter's boy, Dan Shepherd, was riding in the Red Bull Elite Youth 65cc Cup under granddad's watchful gaze! Following an understandably steady start round the forbidding former GP track at Foxhill, Dan was lying just outside the top 20 in a fiercely competitive class after three rounds of Red Bull action.

Lining up alongside Dan at Foxhill was a lad who carries one of the most iconic surnames in the sport. Max Bickers, from Ipswich, is the grandson of 1961 and '62 European (ie world!) 250 champion Dave Bickers. Dave, 'The Coddenham Flyer', was a spectacular, inspirational and utterly genial man who became a genuine household name through BBC TV Grandstand live broadcasts and, with his friends Torsten Hallman and Roger De Coster, led the European invasion of America in the late sixties. He also founded a successful stunt management business for film and television!

His son Paul became a British championship rider and now runs the family business. "We do lots of stuff for East Enders and Top Gear," reported Paul.

"And the Old Man [now 72] has got interested in bikes again. He's just fitted a Triumph engine into a CZ frame. He never liked those CZ engines!" An understanding dad, Dave Bickers never put any pressure on Paul during the latter's racing career and Paul in turn was well pleased with Max's top 10 finish in the Elite Youth Cup at Foxhill.

A former Top 40 British motocrosser with KTM and Kawasaki and winner of the Weston Beach Race, Cornishman Andy Gilbert has his son Josh racing in the Red Bull Elite Youth 85cc Small Wheel class. Josh mounted the rostrum at Foxhill and Canada Heights and lay joint second in the series after three rounds, tied with 2009 65cc champ Conrad Mewse.

The most successful Weston warrior of them all, Nottingham's Rob Meek won the epic beach race five times (including a hat-trick between 1995 and 1997). A former 250 grand prix rider and AMCA champion, 'Meeky' has sired three sons who masquerade under their mum Debbie's surname of Watson. The smallest and fastest of these three blue-eyed blondes is Ben – the 2009 Red Bull Elite Youth Cup 85cc Small Wheel champ – who, at just 12 years old, has captured the attention of four-time world champion Harry Everts at his Spanish training camps and is competing strongly against lads two years his senior in this year's 85cc Big Wheels aboard his Red Bull-backed KTM.

Second at Foxhill behind Ben Howell, Watson lost out on a tie-break for the overall to his namesake at Landrake before finishing third, ahead of Howell, at Canada Heights. Only seven points separated the two Bens at the top of the table after three compelling contests!

Ben Watson's tall, gangling brothers Nathan and the returning Ryan are contesting the Rookies Elite Youth Cup for MX2 machinery. Nathan was last season's 85cc Big Wheel champ, completing a notable family double with kid brother Ben. He finished on the podium down in Cornwall but dropped to fifth in the series after a poor day at Canada Heights where he was joined on the startline by East Anglian Bradley Banks. Bradley's dad Mark – a former rival of Rob Meek's – won the 1988 British 125cc championship for Honda UK and mounted both 250 and 500cc grand prix rostrums. Even more impressively, granddad John – 'The Baron' of Bury St Edmunds – won six British titles and twice finished second in 500cc world championships, losing out by a single point to Paul Friedrichs in 1968!

Bradley's cousin Elliott Banks-Browne – a ringer for their granddad – lay second in the Red Bull MX2 Pro National series on his DB Racing Honda after a sequence of stirring duels with Irishman Martin Barr. Elliott's mum is Melanie Banks – Mark's sister – and his dad and mechanic Ian Browne a legendary wrench (with legendary wingnut ears!) who took Jeremy Whatley tantalisingly close to a 250 world title in 1988. And in that curious Cycle of Life, Whatley's son Kristian – already reigning British Open champion for LPE Kawasaki – held third just behind Banks-Browne in the Red Bull Pro MX2 ranks, both 20-year-olds potential winners! Jem Whatley won five grands prix and four 250cc national championships, finished top three in the world and claimed the 'old' British Open (now MX1) title for Kawasaki in 1991. He was a mischievous, Machiavellian rebel blessed with sublime skills – Kristian is >>

ALAN CLARKE NAILS NYMPHFIELD
ON HIS BRIAN LEAK HUSQVARNA
IN JULY, 1973



was armed with his mom's Kodak Brownie camera.
After art college he mixed life as a graphic designer,
magazine art director, photographer and part-time art
college tutor with motocross and photo-journalism.
Now he's a commentator, painting pictures with words.
He never did get a proper job...

JACK BURNICLE is the godfather (our words, not his) of
British MX journalism. Born in Billingham, County Durham, to
Bella and nutty (his words, not ours) musical genius Stan
Burnicle, Jack was mad about cars and motor racing as a kid.
At sweet 16 he got a motorbike, rode it to a local 'scramble'
and was instantly, hopelessly hooked. Next time he went he

Hand Double Weight
White Standard

Mark 'Burgerman' Barnes clinches the
1983 125 National title at Foxhall

(\$37315)



DESCRIPTION SIGNEMENT	
Béतरी Thidaire	★Wife Femme
Occupation GRAPHIC DESIGNER	
Profession	
Place of birth BILLINGHAM	lieu de naissance
Date of birth 9/3/47	
Date de naissance	
Country of Residence ENGLAND	Pays de résidence



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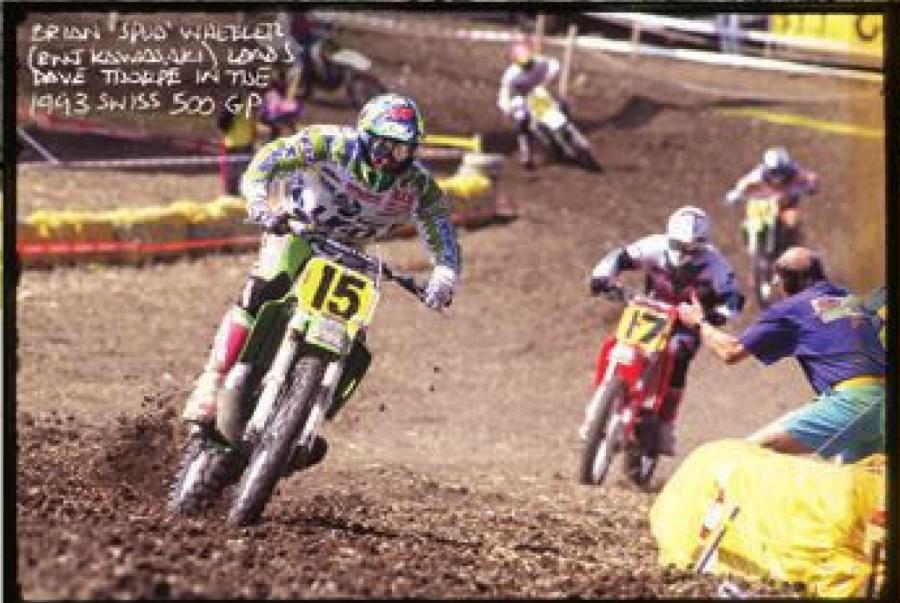
Our **Anti-Wallow Control (AWC)** ensures that your rebound adjustments have no effect on compression. This gives you the maximum amount of traction and control for all sections of the track. You no longer have to sacrifice performance in the whoops for protection against bottom-out events. Our ingenious **F.A.S.T. (Fast Adjust Spring Technology)** makes preload adjustments nearly effortless with just a 4 mm hex wrench.



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STUART NUNN (CZ)
BOTTLED BUT HEAT
TO FINISH 10TH IN THE
SECOND WORLD GP OF THE
1975 BRITISH 500 GP
AT HAWKSTONE PARK



an unnervingly convincing carbon copy!

Yet another kid carrying on a family tradition in the Elite 85 Big Wheel class is Matthew Harrison. His dad Paul was a prominent British Open championship contender in the seventies, riding CZs and Maicos under the Mick Berrill banner. The older of two fast brothers from a farm outside Market Harborough in the East Midlands who regularly made successful winter forays over to New Zealand, Paul finished top 10 in the 1978 British Open championship and made the ACU grading list for the following year's 250 GPs. Unfortunately, an eye injury hampered his prospects although I was privileged to enjoy a glorious overland trip to the opening round at Sabadell, in Spain, in the family Ford Transit with Paul and his mum! 'PH' was typically modest about his son's chances, realising Matthew faced a pretty steep learning curve on the national scene but was more optimistic about Matthew's mate Robert Davidson. And he was right – son Matthew lay just inside the top 20 after three rounds but Davidson hovered in seventh, ahead of supercross superstars Chubbie Hammond and Corrie Southwood!

Another Red Bull Elite Rookies contender with a notable South Western surname is Bristol's Bradley Wheeler. His father Brian – he of the enormous Desperate Dan chin, affectionately nicknamed 'Spud' – campaigned

Kawasaki and KTM during the early nineties, placing as high as fifth in the British Open series and finishing 10th in the 1993 500cc world championship on an RWJ Kawa. As kids Brian and his brother Tim laboured under the hostile eye of a schoolboy dad who used to gesture rudely at the boys if he felt they weren't going fast enough. Let's hope Spud isn't inflicting such treatment on his tall, slim son Bradley, a promising 10th in the table after three rounds!

The oldest guy in the Red Bull paddock has to be 39-year-old Mark Eastwood, whose fabled dad Vic raced with wild-eyed intensity against Dave Bickers in those blistering BBC Grandstand broadcasts. Both Eastwoods suffered the frustration of finishing second in the

British Open series (Vic in 1974 and '75, Mark in 1993 and '95!) but Mark made some amends last year by clinching his third successive Fuchs-Silkolene 2-stroke British Open Expert championship.

Finally, the inaugural Red Bull Pro MX1 title was won in 2009 by MVR-D Suzuki's Carl Nunn. Now 30 years old, Carl is the son of Dave Bickers' one-time protégé Stuart Nunn. A CZ and Kawasaki star, Stuart competed (with Bickers) at the original 1972 US Supercross in the Los Angeles Olympic stadium, raced 500 GPs and won the Shell National Under 21 championship against guys like Roger Harvey, Rob Hooper... and Alan Clarke.

Which is where we came in!

"I can do skids n'all mister!"
Jeffro looks surprisingly in
control as he masters a
cambered climb



QUICK OUT THE BLOCKS!

OUR CHIEF MX TESTER POPS HIS ENDURO SPRINT CHERRY AND DESPITE A FIENDISHLY EARLY START AFTER A NIGHT ON THE SAUCE DISCOVERS HE'S ACTUALLY PRETTY BLOODY GOOD AT IT...

Words by Jeff Perrett Photos by Nuno Laranjeira

You do it to yourself, you doooo, and that's what really hurts'... I'm swerving all over the road winding through the New Forest at stupid o'clock in the morning and Radiohead's song 'Just' comes on my iPod which is cracked up to full-bore in a futile attempt to wake me up. How completely bloody apt!

So how did I find myself in a situation like this – again? I've never seen eye to eye with alarm clocks set before 6am but on this occasion I really could've made life a little easier for myself. Y'see, the night before the little demon in my head started tapping his finger on the inside of my skull, demanding I go to the pub. On a normal Saturday before a Bank Holiday Monday that plan of action would be perfectly acceptable – especially after an invite from a member of the opposite sex – but when the following day you're racing your first ever sprint enduro and you have to drive into the heart of Wales to do it then Horlicks and an early night is the smart choice!

But 'smart' and 'Perrett' are rarely used in the same sentence so 2.37am was the time on the clock when I rolled under my duvet. My alarm was set for 3.45am so at that stage I knew I was already in trouble, especially when I planned to be in bed by 8pm.

Fast forward five hours and several cans of Red Bull and I'm like Sebastian Loeb with conjunctivitis as I rally my new Golf GL through the valley roads. It goes quite well considering I bought it for £400 off a Romanian fella and sounds throaty too with its blowing exhaust. The drive is actually quite exhilarating considering my eyes are like pee holes in the snow, I can't really focus and the caffeine is now flowing through my body.

By the time I finally make it to the venue in Saint Wells, just a few valleys over from the motocross track at Rhayader, the caffeine, excitement and effects of the night before have

taken hold and the only thing on my mind is finding a Porta-pooer! I do and with the kids safely dropped off I hunt down Mr Enduroman – Jonty Edmonds – to get myself sorted as I have absolutely no idea what the protocol is or even how the series works.

Jonty, as many of you will know, is one of the most highly-respected enduro photojournalists in the world and on top of that he's a bloody tidy rider himself having competed at the highest level before, like myself, turning to commentating on the sport we love through print media. He's a bloody good bloke and friend too so of course when Jonty asked me if I wanted to come along and give his new series a blast I jumped at the chance.

This was the final round of the British Enduro Sprint Championship and the first opportunity I'd had to go and try it. The only enduro event I've ever done was a 24-hour team event around a World War Two army barracks in East Germany back in 2006 with Ryan Voase – I've never even raced Weston – and it slashed it down the whole time. To this day it's one of the most physically and mentally demanding things I've ever done. We had electrical issues and our lights were so dim we probably would've been better off riding one-handed while holding a candle in the other but somehow we won after coming close to throwing in the towel.

The BESC on the other hand looked a far more enjoyable prospect. The sun was lighting up the beautiful scenery, people were not speaking German (shouting and sounding aggressive) and I didn't feel like I was in Colditz. From what I could see of the track it reminded me of my days of youth motocross riding at my two local clubs – Hants and Dorset SSC and Ringwood SSC. Yellow tape was gently flapping and reflecting beams of sunlight as it lay swept out up and down the hills on the opposite side of the valley.

>>



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Jeffro ends the day a very respectable third in the Expert class

Once I had run through everything with Jonty and got myself signed on I grabbed my kit and got changed in the back of the KTM truck. Just to make the day even sweeter I was a fully-supported KTM rider on a 2011 EXC-F 250 with David Knight pitting next to me, whoever he is! I had quick catch up with Knighter as it had been a while since we last spoke and he told me how slippery the track was the previous day in torrential rain. I resisted the temptation to ask David for any tips – if I tried to ride like David Knight I was more likely to ride like David Blunkett so I decided to stick to my own game plan. Not that I had one.

I rolled out for my practice lap still blissfully unaware of the procedure. I just went down to the start, sat in the start box and then rolled out onto the track when I was summoned by DJ Nev the start marshal. As I rolled down the off-cambered turn directly off the start the front end immediately started to tuck in and slide on the grass and with it came a smile to my ginger chops. I was 20 yards into my first lap and already there was something technical to deal with.

As I continued around the lap I started to

really feel for everyone who rode the day before – it was greasy enough with the sun out and the wind blowing, it must've been like riding on ice the day before. I slid around with my feet up on the pegs taking it as easy as I could – I was after all running in a new bike and I had no idea where I was going. I hadn't had time to walk the track and besides it was over two miles long and I never even walked a GP track back when I was racing them.

The refusal to waste energy I didn't have had done nothing to help my cause when I turned a sharp, wet corner and was greeted with a slimy log and a tractor tyre that someone had placed in the track! Not really sure how to tackle the obstruction I figured it wasn't best to stop and lose momentum on the grassy incline so I hooked a gear, kept constant throttle and picked up the front wheel over the log with a pull on the bars. I breezed over. This enduro lark is a doddle!

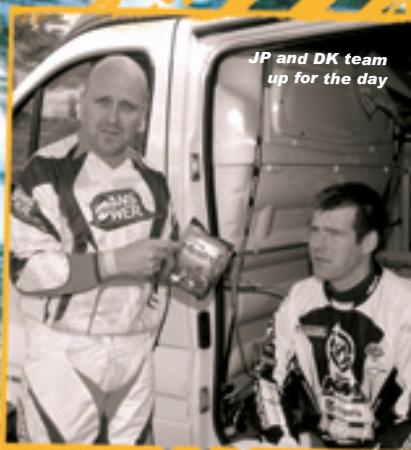
I was breezing over the tyre too until I was just about to roll over the top and down the other side. Bizarrely, I started to roll backwards – did the new KTM have a reverse gear that nobody told me about? To be fair I controlled the roll back quite well, probably due to

endless practising on my BMX back when I had hair and was actually credible on the streets. My backwards journey came to a halt when I hit the log. With a healthy gathering of spectators I gently pulled away with my pride only slightly dented and rode the 'chicken run' around the outside and decided I'd deal with the tyre on my first timed lap.

I came out of the chicken run to find a small section of rocks – the likes of which I last saw in a dried-up riverbed in New Zealand. I turned onto them and footed my way through. It was pretty pathetic really. Stephen Hawking would've found a better line! Needless to say, the rocks were to become my nemesis...

With the rocks behind me I had a small breather and then took on the tight hairpin that had three logs through it – yet another emphatic display of man and machine in perfect disharmony followed. By the time I got over them with a bigger dent in my pride I couldn't wait to get the hammer down and get on the gas – mostly through embarrassment, I wanted to get out of there as quickly as possible.

The rest of the lap was blissful. I loved >>



JP and DK team up for the day



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it. Fast and sweeping open bends, up and down, with a brilliant little wooded section at the end. It was slippery but it was obvious it would be almost prime by the time my first timed lap came around. I came in and gave Ross and Richard at KTM UK a little rundown and after a quick glug of water I was out for my first timed lap.

A sprint enduro is exactly what it says. Throughout the day you get eight timed laps and then they put those eight times together to give you your overall time. All pretty simple really. If you don't finish a lap you're given the time of the slowest rider in your class plus two minutes on top. If you fail to start a lap three minutes are added to the slowest rider's time. There are various groups catering for all levels of rider and they run in that order throughout the day with riders being let off about every 30 seconds so there is a constant flow of riders on the track.

My first lap was going good. I felt confident and was preloading and bouncing over bumps and carrying good corner speed, well, until the bloody rocks at least! I skipped over the log, popped up over the tyre and with a straight run into the rocks and carrying momentum I planned to float over the top. It was not a good plan! I got to within two feet of the end of the section, hit one of the jutted edges, stopped dead and was ejected out the side door. All hot and flustered I then completely balls'd up the log hairpin that followed and by the time I'd made it out of the 'extreme' section I wanted to find Jonty and punch him in the face!

Rules are simple – luckily, so is Jeff



I powered down the straight that followed, turned down into the woods that joined the two fields and lost the front end on the little wooden bridge – I was down again! Jonty was stood right in front of me and I was tempted to walk over and give him a Glasgow kiss but knew I'd probably collapse before I got to him. I remounted and completed the lap with a time of 9.50.72 compared with Knighter's opening lap time of 7.40.54.

My second lap wasn't any better because I never even started it! I was casually chatting away to Ross, doing my best to make my lap sound better than it was. By the time I got down to the start DJ Nev just shook his head. Oh well, at least the pressure of the win was off. I then continued to crash and get disheartened in the rock section for the next three laps, losing well over a minute each time. The only lap I nailed the section I then run out of fuel. Plenty in the see-through tank but nobody told me it had a reserve tap. Still, on a positive note, I can safely say the electric start won't go flat after having my thumb on it for two minutes before I worked out that my Toomer had run dry!

By that stage it didn't matter. I was just enjoying the challenge of trying to better my time and my riding ability each time out and that's the beauty of the sprint enduro. The spirit of competition is there but because of the format it's a very social event. It's like doing eight very long GP qualifying laps. Okay, there are rocks and trees but there's a definite motocross feel about it and I have no doubt it will continue to grow and unite the off-road motorcycling world. I seriously can't recommend it enough.

In the end I got within 54 seconds of Knighter's best time which wasn't too bad and incredibly finished third in the Expert 1 class but I never really mastered the rocks – they whipped me like a dominatrix! Which is exactly why I'll be back to try again for sure, that I can guarantee. And this time I won't go out the night before!

To find out more about the British Enduro Sprint Championship log on to www.enduro-sprint.com – my special thanks go to Shaun, Ross and Richard at KTM for sorting out the bike and Jonty for encouraging me to get back out on a bike...



2010 RM-Z250

SPECIFICATIONS >>

Capacity: 249cc
Bore and stroke: 77mm x 53.6mm
Transmission: Five-speed
Fuel tank capacity: 6.5 litres
Front suspension: Showa 47mm forks
Rear suspension: Showa shock absorber
Seat height: 955mm
Wheelbase: 1475mm
Dry weight: 104kg
Price: £5649



YELLOW FEVER!

THE 2010 RM-Z250 IS A SAFFRON SCREAMER THAT DEFINITELY DOESN'T DESERVE TO BE DESCRIBED AS MELLOW YELLOW – QUITE RIGHTLY – AND THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT WE'VE NOW GOT ONE ON LONG-TERM TEST...

Words and photo by Sutty

Believe it or not it's almost 40 years since Suzuki won their first motocross world championship with Belgium's Joel Robert rocketing to victory in the 1970 world champs on a factory RH250. From that point on the yellow brand have notched up another 29 titles – their most recent champion being 2009 MX3 victor Pierre Alexandre Renet.

While 250cc two-strokes and 450 four-strokes have brought Suzuki some success – 11 titles in total – it's in the smaller capacity class that Suzuki have seen the most silverware. After dominating the division for 10 years after its inception in 1975, later championship wins also came the factory team's way in 1990 and '91, then privateer Pedro Tragter popped out a title two years later. But since then there's been nowt but drought in the 125cc/MX2 class.

The main reason behind the dry spell is undoubtedly Suzuki's decision to concentrate on the premier class whether it be named 250cc, MXGP or MX1 as we know it now. But after a

15-year absence where no 125 nor 250F Suzuki came close to even challenging for the crown they must have figured enough was enough and vowed to return to the smallest division.

Back in 2008 Sylvain Geboers' GRP outfit started a programme to bring Suzuki's baby racer up to speed, initially running factory bikes through two satellite teams – Inotec and Swift – before bringing the whole deal back in-house one year later and running a two-man team from their ridiculously immaculate base in Lommel, Belgium.

While it's safe to say that the programme was brought into play to coincide with the career path of Ken Roczen, the benefits of a better race bike are also passed on to us – the consumer – with a ton of technical information fed back through the chain to Suzuki HQ in Japan which ensures that the stock RM-Z just keeps getting better and better.

Launched in 2004, the RM-Z was originally built in partnership with Kawasaki and although a decent enough bike it suffered with some

overheating and valve issues. Aside from getting bigger radiators and a more user-friendly waterpump cover that made changing the oil filter without dropping the coolant possible, the '05 wasn't a whole heap different to the '04 while the '06 was simply a re-stickered '05 model.

Thankfully, the Suzuki got a major overhaul for 2007 – in fact it was all-new from the ground up – and considered to be much more competitive although it still did next to nowt on the world stage where Swift Suzuki's Sean Hamblin was Suzuki's #1 rider ending the world championship in 21st position. Reasonable upgrades for '08 and '09 kept things competitive for the masses but the 2010 model – the first that could feasibly have benefitted from 2008's R&D work – is much changed, proves to handle way sweeter than ever before in early tests and comes with the added bonus of EFI.

Okay, so the all-new EFI system has little to do with lessons learned in MX2 GP competition – that's also brand-new for the team this year – but I know for sure that the improved geometry



Concussion numero siete por favor!



The Concussion Counter

WHY MX2 MACHINES MEAN MISERY FOR MY GREY MATTER...

I think it's fair to say that I've been a little bit unlucky with injuries throughout my motocross career because as well as doing a fubar-job on my right knee I've pretty much broken at least one of every bone in my body bar these three – my skull's still un***ked, my pelvis is in one piece and funny enough I've never hurt a humerus. However, on my way to notching up that impressive list of injuries I never once knocked myself out – well not until I started working for DBR...

It's kind of ironic that for the whole of my racing career – that I funded by working as a Ford technician – I picked up a plethora of physical injuries that stopped me from earning my crust then as soon as I found a career that requires more brains than brawn I immediately set about screwing up my noggin instead. Of course, it's not my fault – it's those pesky MX2 class bikes.

Being what Jake Nicholls would describe as 'a big ol' boy' I jumped straight out of the 125 class as soon as I left the schoolboys so the majority of my bone-crunching crashes came courtesy of my inability to tame 250 two-strokes. It wasn't until 2004 and the appearance of 250 four-strokes from each of the big four that I even considered trying my hand in the 125 class again and when Kawasaki kindly offered us a KX250F for long-term test my fate was sealed.

My first race of the year ended with a knock out-induced ambulance trip to Bournemouth hospital after I tried to drill myself headfirst into the Matchams sand and then after that mid-race power naps became a regular occurrence. The final straw was when the concussion count became so many – and frequent – that they took my bike away for my own safety. Humph! But I wasn't done with knocking myself out on 250s just yet...

After a reasonably successful – and almost injury-free – year on a fo-fiddy in '06 I got an invite to race at the Tenerife International come the end of the year. Unfortunately, the new 450 I'd been promised was snapped up by some guy called Cedric Melotte and I was plonked on a brand-new 250F Yamahauler instead. While practice and qualifying went pretty well as I reminded myself just how much fun 250Fs are to ride it all went tits up seven seconds into the first moto when I went down hard heading into turn one and woke up half-a-minute later.

So as a rough calculation I reckon that's seven or so knock-out performances in total – all on 250Fs. Is seven really a lucky number or can I make it to eight and beyond? I guess we'll find out in the coming months...

and handling definitely has as Xavier Boog came close to podiuming the bike on several occasions in '08 while extensively developing the chassis and testing different suspension linkages week-in, week-out.

While a sweet turning and handling bike is always a bonus it's horsepower that's king in the MX2 class and the new RM-Z produces plenty. While it might not be as quick in a straight line as the KTM the low-end grunt the RM-Z's famed for along with the improved amounts of mid and top make this machine ultra-competitive while the EFI ensures throttle response is instant throughout the range.

With an empty diary for the next few weeks until the Brit champs resume at Foxhill the plan is to race the RM-Z as much as possible whether it be motocross or hare and hound enduro. Before that though it's makeover time so tune in next month to see how that turns out and to see how the RM-Z performs in a bunch of different environments with a fat man onboard.

D = MX



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Rockstar Trooper 2 Helmet £219.99

Rockstar Defcon Pant £129.99

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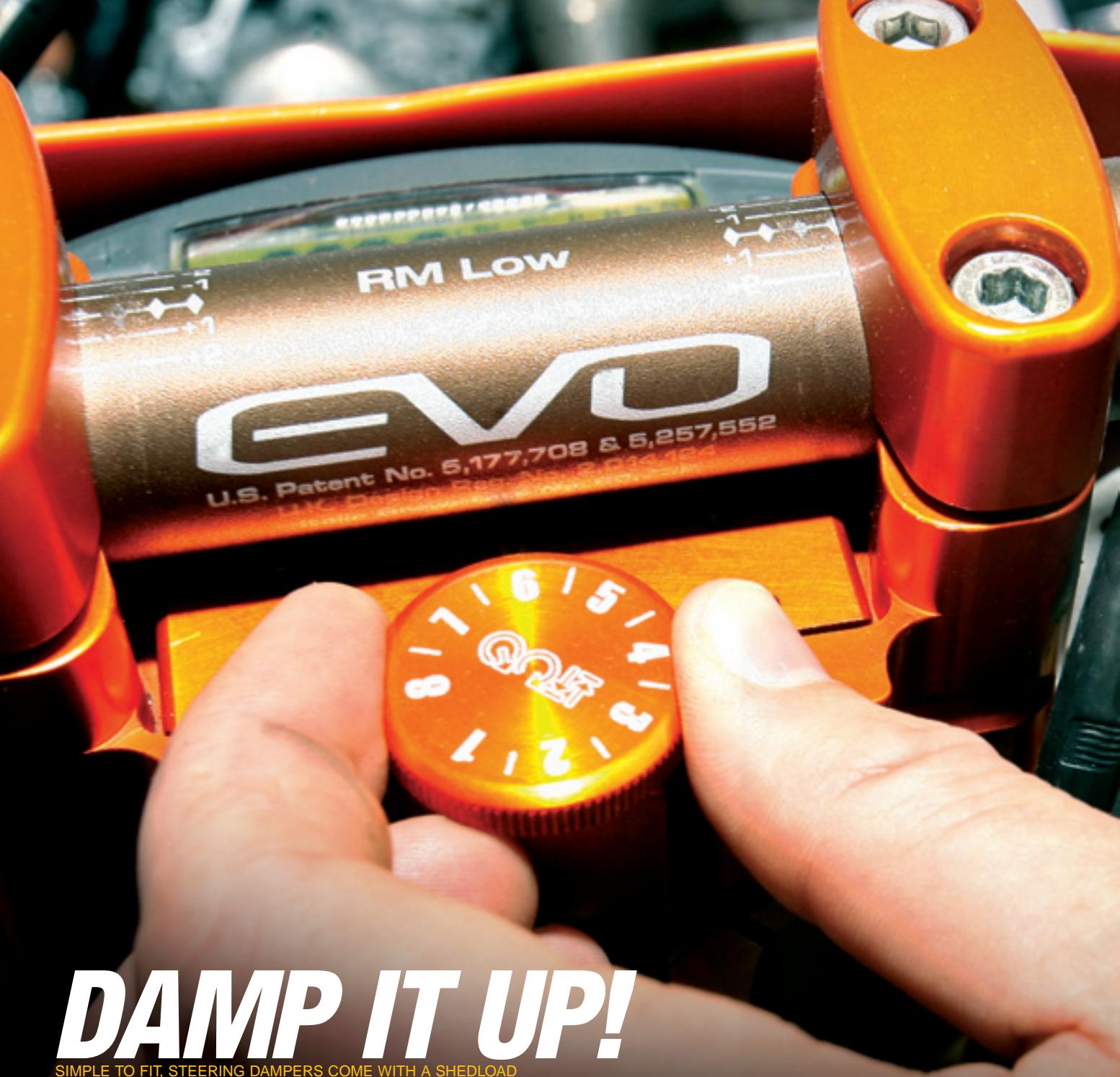
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Black Rockstar



DAMP IT UP!

SIMPLE TO FIT, STEERING DAMPERS COME WITH A SHEDLOAD OF BENEFITS – SO WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?

Words by Geoff Walker Photos by Sutty

Steering dampers are designed to alleviate headshake or wobble at higher speeds and can also be very helpful when it comes to dealing with heavy landings from jumps, drop-offs etc. These dampers are technical royalty and a pretty simple-to-fit aftermarket part – unless you ride a CRF with a fitted mini-damper as stock, in which case you will already know the benefits.

There are basically two types of steering damper. Number one is the linear style damper as fitted to the Honda CRF450. This style of damper operates like a small shock absorber and they are fitted longitudinally or transversely from either the top or bottom triple clamp to the frame. The second style of damper is the rotary style damper which operates via a rotating pivot. This type of damper is mounted coaxially with the steering axis and fitted to the top triple clamp as shown on these fine pages right here.

The rotary damper is the most common in off-road and these units go down an absolute storm in America. If you are ever lucky enough

to go riding in the SoCal desert you will see pretty much every bike fitted with a steering damper as our rather loud, burger-eating pals over there grip it and rip it across the desert at warp speed without a speed wobble in sight!

These dampers are all made to be fully adjustable for all conditions and it's amazing just how easy they make riding. It really is noticeable how much pressure the units take off your arms as the level of control takes away any nervous action or twitchiness you may get from the front of your steed. The units are expensive but once you have one you can use it for years if the clamps and frames don't change too much.

Some dampers require a bracket to be welded to the frame but as you can imagine this is a pain in the arse. Most units now come with the lower fixing bracket which fits to the top bearing cup area of the frame's head tube. To fit this bracket you have to whip the top triple clamp off. If you are on your own doing this on a KTM you should remove the front wheel and forks to make life easier. This is necessary on the KTM

as it uses a different set-up to most other bikes as it does not run with a steerer tube tension adjust nut underneath the top clamp.

This clamp holds the stationary pin which makes the connection to the rotary damping unit. When you have fitted the clamp to the frame simply rebuild the front end. You are now ready to fit the damper to the top clamp. The unit shown is made for the stock KTM clamps so I have had to space it up a little bit as the Major of Nevarite's Six Days special is fitted with the bobby dizzler factory clamps. This unit fits pretty easily to the top clamp. Make sure you use threadlock on all handlebar clamp fixings as it's never a good thing to have your bars disconnect from the top clamp! Bad times!

With the parts all fitted you simply line everything up so the bottom holding clamp and pin is centralised and securely slotted in the upper damping arm. This may take a bit of lining up and spacing to get correct but when it is all in line and tightened up you will be in steering damper heaven!

DBR TESTED

ONE INDUSTRIES TROOPER 2.0 HELMET

The Trooper helmet has been a bit of a favourite of mine in the looks department since it first came out a few years ago. It had a little bit less padding inside than a lot of the helmets out there so the comfort level was not as good as some but in my eyes it looked and still looks cool as feck. Well the Trooper 2.0 has upped the comfort stakes and while the look of the new version doesn't hit me as hard as the original, the slightly squarer look will appeal to the young whippersnappers out there. The goggle port is ample so any type of goggle fits easily. Comfort and good looks make this a winner.

Price: £199.99

DEFCON KIT

The 17-panel Defcon shirt is made to be most comfortable in the attack position according to the info. How cool is that! Your kit lets you know when you are in the correct riding position! A race shirt AND coach for the price of one!

The race pants are roomy fitting and again are cut for rider positioning. They are quite a heavy pant and took the rock rubs and tree stabs of the KTM test in Spain for two days solid without a major mark on them. The kit also had to take about 40 gallons of my sweat over two days and the shirt dried out quickly although it will never fully recover from that amount of man sweat! No kit on earth could survive that kind of abuse and come out smelling of roses!

The Zero gloves are the real gem of the bunch. They fit really well, have very good Velcro and the strap is shaped to take pressure off the wrist.

Price: Shirt £34.99 Pants £119.99 Gloves £24.99

HART AND HUNTINGTON BOOTS

These boots are a collaboration with One Industries and 661 to make them fully tattoo stylee – just like the back-flippin' Pink-lovin' Carey Hart whose name they bear. Fit and comfort are good and if you want a light boot then this could be the pair to go for. I have worn 661 boots for years and the soles do wear quite quickly. I am going to keep hitting the tracks in these new ones for a while but they seem to be holding up better after the few hours hard use they've already suffered while hitting Spanish rocks and grinding down on the 2011 KTM pegs!

Price: £219.99

Supplier: oneindustrieseurope.com



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IDENTITY CRISIS!

DEAN WILSON STARTED RACING IN HIS NATIVE SCOTLAND BEFORE MOVING TO CANADA. THE FASTEST ROOKIE IN THE AMA 250cc NATIONALS, THE 17-YEAR-OLD IS NOW HOT PROPERTY ON BOTH SIDES OF THE ATLANTIC – ESPECIALLY WHEN IT COMES TO MX DES NATIONS TEAM SELECTION... SO WHO TO CHOOSE – CANADA OR GB?

Monster Energy/Pro Circuit Kawasaki's Dean Wilson is killing it right now. Even with some dumb mistakes – like moving over for team-mate Tyla Rattray at the Texas National that ended up costing him the overall win there – Wilson has been up front nearly every week and at Budds Creek he took his first-ever AMA National victory, moving to within two points of Rattray in the championship chase for second place.

A Scot by way of Canada (where he moved with his parents as a youngster), we figured the folks in the UK would want to know a bit more about the 17-year-old...

DBR: You said you grew up in Scotland until you were eight or nine. Did you already start riding dirt bikes back there?
DW: "My dad bought me a bike when I was three – an LEM 50 – and he took me to local tracks in Scotland because he rode as well. We mainly went to Doune and Drumclog. Those are the two main tracks that I went to. Then I got a KX60 after I grew out of the 50 and I raced a lot all over Scotland – and I wasn't very good at all. I'm pretty sure I was getting lapped every race but I did a lot of racing in Scotland. It was always a lot of mud racing."

DBR: Did you ever go south much across the border into Merry Olde Englandshire?

DW: No, we weren't really that serious. We just went to the closer races."

DBR: So, you basically got riding because your dad did. Was it because you saw pictures of your dad and wanted to do it too or did he more or less say 'hey, do you want to get a dirt bike?' How did that work?

DW: "I think I just always had a passion for dirt bikes when I was smaller. For Christmas when I was three I had an LEM 50 underneath the tree. We had a field right by my house in East Kilbrae and I just rode back in the fields and that's where I learned how to ride."

DBR: What did your dad do for a living back in Scotland?

DW: "He had a carpentry business. He did kitchens, everything. It was called Maple Leaf Kitchens or something."

DBR: That's funny that it was Maple Leaf Kitchens and then you moved to Canada...

DW: "Well, my mom and dad obviously were born in Scotland. They lived there for a long time and then went to Canada, just for something different, when they were like 22 and they lived there for 10 years. Then my dad's dad was really sick so they came back to look after him and then grandpa passed away. I never got to meet him but that's when I was born. And then they lived in Scotland until 1999, then moved back to Canada."

DBR: Do you still have many memories? Or is it kind of a blur since you've been on this side of the ocean for so long?

DW: "Oh no, I remember everything.

I hadn't been there since I moved from

there and I went back last year and everything was exactly the same so it was pretty cool. I went and rode the local tracks that I used to ride and they were just how I pictured them."

DBR: The last few years at the Motocross des Nations a lot of the time Great Britain has been two-thirds Scottish. Shaun Simpson, Billy MacKenzie... So there are lots of Scotsmen racing dirt bikes. I heard at the races that you were trying to update it so that you were saying you were from Scotland because there is only one place you can actually be 'from', right?

DW: "Yeah, exactly. It's pretty tough because I lived in Canada. I raced in Canada quite a bit but at the same time I wasn't really living in Canada year-round because I've been in California most of the time because it's so cold in Canada. It's kind of just a bummer that everybody tries to claim me but whatever."

DBR: What I'm getting at is that you rode for Canada in the des Nations last year and I know that you probably don't want to piss everybody off but you have dual citizenship, right?

DW: "I rode for Team Canada in the des Nations last year and it was pretty cool to go to Italy and stuff. If I would have gotten asked by Team Great Britain last year I would have definitely done it in a heartbeat but I think maybe I was just over-anxious and just wanted to go. Canada was the first team to ask me and I was like 'oh yeah, let's do this'. So I rode for Team Canada and"



STATESIDE

Steve Cox is an American motor-journalist who follows the entire AMA SX/MX tour. Since moving on from US weekly Cycle News he's struck out on his own to do the freelance thing and recently became one of Racer X's editors at large. He knows the sport and its personalities like few others and as our US Editor provides insight straight from the Stateside scene...

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realistically I didn't even race the des Nations because we didn't even make the Main so it was not enjoyable. I mean, it was cool I got to go overseas but it was not enjoyable as in we didn't even get to make the Main so that was kind of disappointing. That was the des Nations last year. Team Great Britain has asked me to do it this year and so has Canada but I'm in a tough position right now and it really sucks because I don't know what's going to happen."

DBR: Yeah, you don't know how exactly to handle it probably – I would say whoever could give you the most money! The good news is that it's going to be in America, at Colorado, which you're going to race for the first time this weekend...

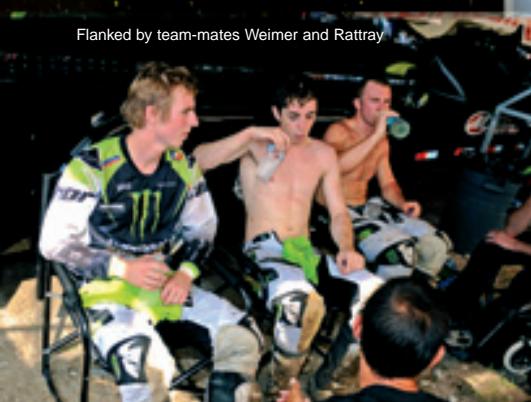
DW: "It'll be a lot easier than last year to be in the des Nations this year because I'll know the track and I know my surroundings more. When I was in Italy I just felt like I was dropped on the other side of the world. Everything was just so different.

In Colorado I'll know that track and the bike will be awesome and I'll have the same surroundings around me and everybody will be there.

I'll definitely be a lot better than last year, that's for sure. We just have to figure out what I want to do."

DBR: Let's switch gears a little bit. When you started racing Nationals this year you couldn't have known completely what to expect, right?

Flanked by team-mates Weimer and Rattray



The Scottish-born teenager has been a revelation in this year's 250cc Nationals



So how have your expectations been met by what the reality of racing the Nationals actually is?

DW: "Going into the Nationals my expectations were to be on the box. In the first moto at Hangtown I was looking good the first lap. I was in fourth, we were all right in the pack and then I fell. Then I got up and crashed again so I ended up 10th. In the second moto I was in third until the last lap and got a fourth. From there I knew I could run up front, I just had to work on a couple of things. During the two-week break I was just working on some stuff. I always knew my speed was there, it was just a matter of putting everything together. I know I'm a top three guy and I think that's where I should be."

DBR: And obviously you are. You went out and you should have won that moto at Texas and you did win the moto at Budds Creek. It was your first time at both of those tracks and that's pretty impressive. Tyla Rattray was telling me that one of the things he struggled with last year was not having all that much time to learn the tracks because you only get the two practices in the morning. You're in that boat now and you're still up front. You're winning and that's really impressive. Have you always been that good at picking up on stuff quickly?

DW: "Kind of. I'm always pretty good at adapting to the track well. My practice times aren't ever that great just because I'm still learning the track. For the first practice you have the first five minutes free so that's when you sort of look at the track and just try and memorise it. From there you're just trying to get in some decent laps for the lap time and it's hard when you're trying to go fast to learn the track. It's just hard to figure out and that's why it's important to walk the track a lot and just memorise it because that's what's going to help you out."

DBR: What about the conditions of the tracks in the Nationals? They've been letting them get really rough this year and it seems like your second moto

is usually your best moto. That makes sense as you're figuring the track out more and more but that's the gnarliest moto of the day..."

DW: "The tracks have definitely been really rough. Budds Creek was really rough. High Point, the second moto was definitely easier than the first moto. If you look at Texas and Budds Creek, it was so hot those second motos it was just insane."

DBR: You've got 14 motos at least left to go – possibly 17 if you're in the des Nations. Do you still feel like there's progress you can make? Do you feel like you can do better than you have been doing?

DW: "Definitely. My first motos, I've not gotten the start that I need to. Every first moto I've come through the pack. If I can put in a solid first moto then get in another solid second moto I think that will be a lot better to help me out in points and overall finish as well. The start is really key and I haven't been getting those in the first motos."

DBR: And how much of that has to do with not getting an excellent qualifying spot?

DW: "Honestly, it depends on how the first corner is. Some starts are pretty fair where if you're kind of outside or kind of inside, you've got a good chance of getting a good start. If it's a start that's got a 180 – like Freestone – the inside was pretty important on that start and that's where your lap times really come into play."

DBR: Do you have one more year on your Pro Circuit deal?

DW: "No, I just signed a one-year deal so we're just trying to organise that, too."

DBR: I always assumed you had a two-year deal but it makes sense from Mitch's perspective. Now all of a sudden the ball is in your court because you're like 'I won, now what? Pay up suckers!...'

DW: "Yep! Get that money out [laughs]!"



Racing to victory at Budds Creek



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Mercedes Terrell

Birthplace: City of Orange in Orange County, California

Birthday: June 2, 1984

Marital Status: "I don't have a ring on my finger!"

Favourite Movie: "This year Avatar was obviously a great, amazing, wonderful movie."

Favourite Music: "I like rock and metal, like AFI."

Favourite Rider: "I do like K-Dub a lot and this isn't because he won this year but Dungey."

DBR: Let's start with how you got here – how did you get into the sport and how did you get into modelling?

Mercedes: "I've been around supercross my whole life. My little sisters actually ride but not professionally. I'm a little bit chicken but I do some of the other dirt sports and my dad builds sand rails so we've always been out in Glamis playing around. I've been around the sport my whole life. The chance to be Miss Supercross came after I had already worked for Monster Energy for a couple years and had been in the scene that way. My agent referred me to them and they went through a couple people and ended up with me. So that's how I got there."

DBR: You said you were Miss O'Neal a couple years ago, right?

Mercedes: "Miss Supercross wasn't a contest for 2010. Usually, I think they do an online contest but I think they didn't really like what they were getting from that. You never know who you're going to get. They ended up interviewing me. They had already met me in person. They had interviewed a couple other girls they had already known in person. And then I ended up with the job."

DBR: How many years had you actually been doing the Monster thing and been on the tour before you got Miss Supercross?

Mercedes: "I had been modelling for six years. With Monster, in 2007, I was Miss Monster Latina so I did a tour with them for a little bit."

DBR: Monster Latina? Is that in Mexico?

Mercedes: "No but a lot of their posters go to Mexico which is cool. I just went to Cabo a couple months ago and walked into some random liquor store to get beer and my poster was on the wall."

DBR: Were you like this is me – can I get free beer?

Mercedes: "Yeah, that's what I did and they said 'no, nothing free'. So I did Monster Latina and did a tour with them but it had nothing to do with supercross. Then I did a ton of stops on the supercross series with Monster in 2009. Before then I was with Boost Mobile and I toured with them and I did some of the supercross stops but not as much as with Monster in '09. Then 2010, I was there at all of them."

DBR: You made some of the clothes that you wore for this shoot so is that a possible future career, designing clothing?

Mercedes: "Definitely. I don't know if that's where I'll find my success but it's something I really enjoy. I always make my own stuff, whether it be for supercross or for Halloween. I'm really into making costumes so if this doesn't pan out in the long run maybe you'll be able to find some Halloween costumes by Mercedes. Not for you guys – for the girls..."



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MAX PAIN!

THINGS AREN'T GOING MAX'S WAY AT THE MOMENT
BUT HE'S DETERMINED TO TURN IT ALL AROUND...

Words by MAX ANSTIE Photo by STEVE COX

So it's been another month where everything has seemed to go wrong at every turn. We have just got into the second half of the year and to be honest it has been the worst six months of my life.

Ever since the San Diego SX life has sucked. Getting hurt at A3, sitting at home sleeping for two months then going down in the second turn at Seattle, getting stuck on a hay bale at Salt Lake, not even making the Main Event at Vegas, riding bad at Hangtown, no breaks at GH then no breaks at Freestone until I finally rode okay in the second moto where I came from 20th to fourth.

At Mt Morris I managed a whole lap before smashing into the fence and then Budds Creek running second the whole moto and going down with three laps to go and messing my ankle up. And finally Colorado where some last-minute technical changes didn't produce the goods like we were hoping they would. Not to mention missing flights and

being stuck in Texas, mother writing unnecessary emails, school work and having to get my life back together. About the only good things that have come out of the last six months is me finding a really good doctor and the last week I spent in Colorado before the race.

So I flew straight from Maryland to Denver on my Jack Jones. It was the first week of my life where I could just concentrate on my riding and nothing else. I was doing a lot of physical training so I could get acclimated to the high altitude. I was staying with Richard and Melissa Pearce from Hard Nutrition in their massive house and was getting driven around in a Corvette.

I was doing a lot of work to get my foot back to 100 per cent for the weekend and really had some quality time on the bike to feel good. I was going out to the local tracks up there with one of my buddies and was eating loads of sweet potatoes the nutritionist put me on. It was like having a holiday but for

my brain. I didn't have to think about anything other than riding, training and feeling good for the weekend. And to be honest after running second all moto last week I was ready for a win this week. I was prepared and ready to race.

Unfortunately, when it actually came down to it I wasn't at home on the bike and I found myself struggling to go even five seconds a lap slower than the fast guys. So the one race I was truly ready for went down the drain.

So the cards are not being dealt in my favour as of right now but I guess it's the bad times that make the good times feel so good. So we will stand again and keep fighting on. I will win a National before the season is over. It's what we do in life that echoes through all eternity. The next six months will be good and Max Anstie will stand on top of the box soon.

Keep digging...

Max

MAX POWER



THE USUAL SUSPECTS!

EVERY YEAR WE GO INTO THE NATIONALS HOPEFUL ABOUT COMPETITION AND EVERY YEAR WE QUICKLY END UP WITH A COUPLE OF CLEAR FAVOURITES...

Why do we do this to ourselves? Every year we get the same thing. We speculate about who will battle it out for the title in the 250cc and 450cc classes in the AMA Nationals and by round three we usually know who's going to win it, despite

the depth in both classes. This year appears to be no different...

After a 1-3 performance at the season-opening Hangtown MX National, Monster Energy Kawasaki's Chad Reed and company head to Texas for round two. The 450cc class goes first again in Texas for TV's sake and in the first moto it's GEICO Powersports Honda's Brett Metcalfe with the holeshot and he leads the first six laps of the race, fighting off the advances of 2010 AMA Supercross champion Ryan Dungey until Dungey takes over on the seventh lap. It isn't too long after that when Metcalfe starts to drop anchor, succumbing to the heat. If you remember, Metcalfe suffered heat exhaustion at this same race in 2007 when riding for Pro Circuit. The heat index peaks in Texas at 112 degrees so it's easy to do.

Metcalfe's then relegated to third by TLD/Lucas Oil Honda's Ben Townley, then to fourth by Reed and then Tommy Hahn goes by. Eventually Metcalfe fades back to seventh while Reed is the guy on the move, grabbing second place with three laps to go behind Dungey who has a quite sizable lead. The moto rundown is Dungey, Reed, Townley, Hahn, Josh Grant, privateer Kyle Regal, Michael Byrne, Kyle Chisholm and Davi Millsaps.

In moto two Metcalfe again grabs the holeshot after recovering back at his pit. He leads the first three laps over Jagermeister KTM's Mike Alessi who struggled to 12th in the first moto. Eventually Alessi finds his way by but Dungey soon follows and it doesn't take him long to get by Alessi and begin to pull away. Alessi then falls out of second place, handing it back to Metcalfe.

Just past the halfway point Regal begins putting on some moves. He passes Reed back again, then gets Alessi and Andrew Short on consecutive laps before setting out after Metcalfe. Eventually he gets Metcalfe too and ends up finishing second in the moto and third overall behind Dungey and Reed. It's easily the best ride of Regal's short career so far but Dungey is the man of the hour, winning both motos going away in a remarkable recovery from his 10-6 score at round one.

"I felt really good today," Dungey says. "I felt strong and I guess it just kind of goes back to putting in your work and doing your time. I think that really helps out when you get to days like this – it's hot. Being in Tallahassee, it's hot there, so it's not like I wasn't used to it so that does help big time. That's kind of what I enjoy about being out in Florida."

The series then heads to High Point where Muscle Milk/JGR/Toyota Yamaha's Grant grabs the lead on the first lap of the first 450cc moto from Dungey. And for a while it looks like he's going to be able to hold on for the win but Dungey catches

fire and chases Grant down, passing him on the 10th lap of 16 for the lead. From there Dungey quickly makes a break for it while Grant appears to settle for second in front of Short.

The only racer who really makes any headway in the moto is Townley who starts the race at the tail end of the top five, has a fall, then works his way up from seventh back into fourth. Behind him comes Motoconcepts Yamaha's Matt Goerke, Metcalfe and then Alessi who started fourth. Defending champ Reed finishes 12th after reportedly having a rock knock his goggle lens out and struggling with vision.

In the second moto Short grabs the holeshot and he begins to pull away right off the bat from Alessi, Grant, MCRMX's Ryan Sipes, Dungey, Metcalfe and the rest of the field. Reed makes contact with another rider in the first turn and has his front brake caliper broken off. He works his way forward from 16th to as high as 12th in the first four laps before dropping out of the race.

Short leads the race and looks like he may be close to getting his first 450cc moto win but Dungey works his way through the field until, on lap five, he grabs second. Over the next five laps he chips away at Short's lead and he makes the pass stick on lap 10, then quickly pulls away. Dungey takes the win – his fourth moto in a row – and the overall while Short finishes second just in front of Metcalfe who comes through from sixth to third. Short is second overall while Metcalfe is third.

At Budds Creek in the first moto Metcalfe has another

After his opening round win defending champ Chad Reed has nothing to offer Ryan Dungey who's pulling clear



Dungey's getting plenty of practice at spraying the champagne

Andrew Short grabs a race win at Budds Creek and ends the day second overall

holeshot to match his two from Texas but he is quickly passed by Short who nearly won that moto at High Point. Short quickly begins to pull away as Metcalfe tries to fight off a slew of riders behind him. The first one by is Dungey followed by Alessi and then Townley but it isn't long before Dungey has a fall and remounts fourth, has to pass Townley again and then sets out after Alessi.

Dungey never can make the pass and although the Dungey/Alessi train closes on Short from time to time they never get close enough to the Honda rider to make a move. Townley runs fourth until lap 14 when he loses the spot to defending champ Reed and it is soon after that Townley slows with bike trouble and ends up 14th. The top five in the moto are Short, Alessi, Dungey, Reed and then Grant who is the last of the riders to pass Metcalfe.

Moto two sees Short grab the holeshot over Dungey, Reed, Metcalfe, Alessi, Townley, Grant and the rest of the field but Alessi suffers a bent front brake rotor in the first turn and he starts getting passed right away, eventually finishing 12th.

Dungey follows Short for three laps before making his move to the lead and at that point Short also starts to fall backward through the pack as he's quickly swallowed up by Reed, Metcalfe and Townley.

Reed races the rest of the moto in second but he can

never bite into Dungey's lead, saying after the race that he probably over-trained in the Florida heat during the week and felt listless on the track. Townley holds off Grant for third while Short, Metcalfe, Sipes, Chisholm, Valli Motorsports Yamaha's Dan Reardon and Grant's team-mate Justin Brayton round out the top 10. So overall Dungey does it again over Short, Reed, Grant and Alessi.

Short's starts have been great most of the year and they are just as good up the start hill at Thunder Valley. In the first moto he grabs the holeshot and begins to put distance on the field right away as Dungey slots into second place. While out front with a pretty massive lead Short goes down, handing the lead to Dungey.

At this point the race looks over but Grant has other ideas. He's all over the Suzuki rider, passing him only two laps later to take over the lead. Dungey can't match Grant's pace and falls to a rather distant second behind the Yamaha rider. Behind them Townley has a great go of it, passing from 10th to fourth in only five laps before tipping over at the bottom of the start hill and falling back to sixth. He later falls a second time and is forced to settle for sixth place.

Rockstar Energy Suzuki's Tommy Hahn starts the moto 11th and methodically works his way up through the pack until he sits third on lap 11 of 16, passing Metcalfe for the position. At the finish Grant holds a comfortable lead over

Dungey followed by Hahn and then Metcalfe who barely holds off Valli Motorsports Yamaha's Kyle Cunningham for fourth. Townley is sixth followed by Chisholm, Short, privateer (for now) Regal and then Reed who rounded lap one in 22nd place.

In the second moto Short again grabs the holeshot and he holds it for three laps before again relinquishing it to Dungey. Dungey begins to pull away while Short starts to fade, eventually being passed by Townley for second and even losing third spot to Metcalfe momentarily before grabbing it back from the Aussie. Alessi finishes fifth ahead of Regal, Reed, Chisholm, Brayton and Grant who finishes 10th after falling in the first turn and getting up dead last.

Hahn drops out of the second moto with a twisted foot that he thought was broken but fortunately turns out just to be badly sprained.

Dungey takes yet another overall with a 2-1 over Townley's 6-2, Metcalfe's 4-4, Grant's 1-10, Short's 8-3, Regal's 9-6, Chisholm's 7-8, Alessi's 12-5, Reed's 10-7 and Brayton's 13-9.

With seven rounds and 14 motos still left to run, Dungey now leads the championship by a massive 51 points over Metcalfe. Third is Reed then Alessi, Short, Grant, Townley, Chisholm, Hahn and Regal. He won the SX title in his rookie season – can he do the same outdoors?

The strain shows on Canard's face after his amazing second race charge at High Point



Frenchman Christophe POURCEL is starting to gap the 250 field



POURCEL POWER!

AFTER MISSING OUT ON LAST YEAR'S 250 TITLE, CHRISTOPHE POURCEL IS AIMING TO MAKE AMENDS...

When you count the potential moto winners in the 250cc class you can easily name a dozen – Christophe POURCEL, Jake Weimer, Tyla Rattray, Dean Wilson, Trey Canard, Eli Tomac, Justin Barcia, Tommy Searle, Broc Tickle, Max Anstie, Blake Baggett, Blake Wharton – and we're probably leaving some out.

In the sweltering Texas heat round one winner Tomac of the GEICO Powersports Honda team grabs the opening 250cc holeshot and he pulls away before POURCEL of the Monster Energy/Pro Circuit Kawasaki team gets into second. At one point POURCEL gets close to Tomac but then goes off the track and hits a fence. Still, he gets going again and, over the course of the next lap-and-a-half, makes up eight seconds on Tomac to take over the lead then puts that many on Tomac over the following lap-and-a-half.

Tomac hangs on for second although he's suffering from the effects of the heat. Then comes POURCEL's team-mate Wilson and Tomac's team-mate Canard, just in front of POURCEL and Wilson's team-mate Weimer.

Tomac again grabs the holeshot to start moto two – making it a four-moto holeshot sweep on the day for the GEICO Powersports Honda team. Behind Tomac comes Wilson this time and before halfway Wilson finds his way by the rookie. Not long after that Tomac begins to drop anchor due to the effects of the heat and then he falls after 11 laps, handing second to Rattray over Tickle, Anstie, Tomac, Canard, Wil Hahn and POURCEL. POURCEL is almost 10th after 10 laps and begins chopping into that lead late in the race but he doesn't have enough time.

On the last lap Wilson incorrectly reads that his

pitboard says he has a 56-second lead so when he sees team-mate Rattray behind him he lets him go by. When Rattray pumps his fist in the air, Wilson realises he has given away the win and throws up his hands which almost causes Tickle to run into him and Tickle takes over second right at the flag from Wilson, Anstie, POURCEL, Hahn, Barcia and Martin Davalos.

If Wilson had held onto first or second in the moto he would've won his first overall but because Tickle zapped him at the line the final overall finishing order is POURCEL, Rattray and Wilson – yet another podium sweep for Mitch Payton's squad. "I think you need to get lucky sometimes," says POURCEL, "so I'm happy about the overall and we'll see next weekend if I can still get it there."

At High Point again POURCEL is fastest in qualifying but this time he has starts too. The rain begins to fall at the start of the first 250cc moto and POURCEL takes the holeshot but trouble on the second lap hands the lead to GEICO Powersports Honda's Barcia who then leads Rattray, FMF KTM's Searle, POURCEL and his team-mate Weimer.

Barcia puts on a clinic. He goes out and dominates the opening moto going away in the slop – which is drying out by the end of the moto – while Rattray hangs on for second in front of Rockstar Energy Suzuki's Baggett, POURCEL and Wilson. Then comes Searle and Weimer, both of whom fall during the course of the moto.

POURCEL nails the second moto holeshot as well but this time he makes it stick – even doubling the famous Tunnel Jump on the opening lap and immediately putting time on Wilson, DNA Shred Stix/Star Racing

Yamaha's Davalos, Rattray, Davalos' team-mate Nico Izzi, GEICO Powersports Honda's Wharton and the rest of the field.

Over the first few laps Rattray chases down Wilson who falls and hands second to the South African. Wharton eventually works his way into third, just in front of his team-mate Canard who amazingly finished the first lap in 21st and climbs through the field to fourth. Fifth goes to Tickle over Wilson, Davalos, Hahn, Baggett and the rest of the field.

With his 2-2 finish Rattray wins his first-ever AMA overall over POURCEL and Wharton. "Mostly, I just went back to what I did in Europe because now I know the tracks so just riding like I did in Europe is working just like it did in Europe," Rattray says. "I think last year I tried to ride more like the young guys here – go out there and try hang it out and just ride wide-open – and for me that doesn't work. I need to ride like I did in Europe, ride technical, ride smooth, don't ride over my head..."

At Budds Creek it's POURCEL again with the holeshot in the first moto over Tomac, DNA Shred Stix/Star Racing Yamaha's Anstie, Barcia, Rattray, Davalos, Weimer, Hahn and the rest of the field. Wilson rounds lap one in 11th just in front of Tickle and Canard rounds lap one in 15th, just in front of Weimer.

POURCEL never pulls away all that much but Tomac soon begins to falter, letting Anstie by for second, then falling and moving backward later in the race to eventually finish 10th. Anstie never gets close enough to POURCEL to pressure him but is never too far back as he fights off the advances of Rattray and Barcia late in the race. But Anstie goes down with less than four laps

to go, handing second to Rattray and third to Barcia. Anstie remounts fifth and then finishes seventh. He is later docked a position to finish eighth for cutting the track. Weimer is also docked a spot which drops him to 21st.

Pourcel eventually takes the win over Rattray, Barcia, Wilson, Hahn and Tickle.

The second moto sees Hahn grab the holeshot which lasts a couple of laps before Wilson makes his way by. Barcia follows suit to move into second while Pourcel seems to hover around in fourth place before losing that spot to Rattray. Rattray soon gets by Hahn as well and the top five looks pretty set. But late in the race Rattray catches Barcia and knows that if he can pass the Honda rider it could mean a second overall win in a row. And Rattray almost has the pass made but falters, goes off the track momentarily and that is all Barcia – and Wilson – need.

So Wilson takes the moto win and the overall over Barcia and Rattray while Hahn finishes fourth. Pourcel falls on the last lap and loses a spot to finish sixth behind Tickle. Weimer is seventh and Canard is eighth. Then comes Wharton and Davalos to round out the top 10.

"Yeah, it feels great!" Wilson says. "It's a dream come true, to say the least. I've always dreamed about winning... I mean, dude, I'm racing against people I look up to. It's pretty crazy. To finally get the monkey off my back and get a win, it feels awesome."

Pourcel takes off from the gate in Colorado in first gear – instead of the usual second gear – due to the elevation and it results in the first moto holeshot over Wilson, Canard, Davalos, Wharton, Rattray, Anstie, Tickle and the rest of the field.

Pourcel doesn't quite run away with it because Wilson actually pressures him a couple times during the race but the Frenchman holds strong for the moto win ahead of Wilson, Canard, Rattray, Tickle, Wharton, Tomac, Davalos, TLD/Lucas Oil Honda's Cole Seely and Weimer who finds his way back to the top 10 after ending up in a pile-up in the second turn.

In the second moto Canard takes the holeshot in front of his team-mate Wharton then Wilson, Rattray, Pourcel, MCRMX's Vince Fries, Weimer, Tomac, Barcia and Matt Lemoine. Canard leads the moto for over half-distance until he is caught by Pourcel. Pourcel studies up on Canard's lines, then makes his move with seven laps to go. Canard hangs tough for a couple of laps but eventually loses touch with Pourcel.

At the finish it's Pourcel with his first 1-1 of the season followed by Canard, Wilson, Rattray, Wharton, Tickle, Barcia, Davalos, Tomac, Darryn Durham from the Honda of Troy team and then Fries.

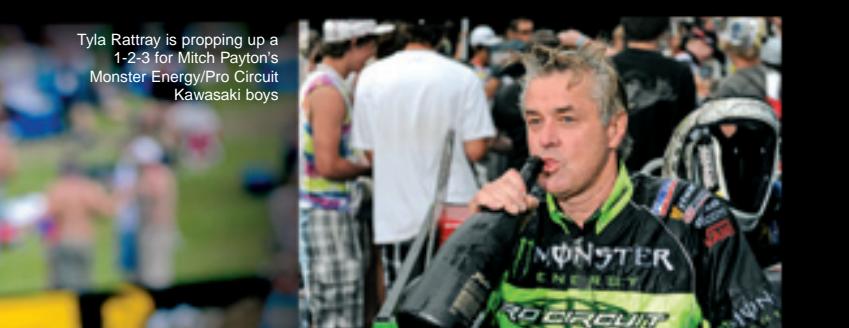
Pourcel takes the win with a 1-1 over Canard's 3-2, Wilson's 2-3, Rattray's 4-4 and Wharton's 6-5. Tickle is sixth over Davalos, Tomac, Seely and Barcia. With 14 motos left to run Pourcel leads the title chase by 34 points from team-mates Wilson and Rattray. Canard is fourth in front of Tickle, Barcia, Tomac, Wharton, Davalos and Hahn.



Josh Grant gets scrubbing at High Point



Injuries are keeping Brit abroad
Tommy Searle off the pace



Tyla Rattray is propelling up a 1-2-3 for Mitch Payton's Monster Energy/Pro Circuit Kawasaki boys



SERIES STANDINGS

450cc >>

250cc >>

1	Ryan Dungey	218	1	Christophe Pourcel	219
2	Brett Metcalfe	167	2	Dean Wilson	185
3	Chad Reed	160	3	Tyla Rattray	180
4	Mike Alessi	154	4	Trey Canard	162
5	Andrew Short	153	5	Broc Tickle	151
6	Josh Grant	152	6	Justin Barcia	140
7	Ben Townley	151	7	Eli Tomac	135
8	Kyle Chisholm	108	8	Blake Wharton	112
9	Thomas Hahn	101	9	Martin Davalos	108
10	Kyle Regal	94	10	Will Hahn	106
23	Ben LaMay	17	12	Tommy Searle	69
24	Steven Clarke	17	13	Max Anstie	64
33	Adam Chatfield	5			



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We recently caught up with injured Monster Energy Kawasaki rider Ryan Villopoto to get his take on the Nationals and everything that he's been through since getting hurt at the St Louis Supercross...

DBR: What's been going on with you since the injury?

RV: "Not too much, just some laying around and trying to heal up. It's been a long time, some surgeries, lots of rehab and just looking forward to getting back on the bike. Actually, I'm going to my doctor tomorrow in Seattle and seeing if I have healed enough to get the word that I can start walking again. When I get that permission I should start riding here real soon. I'm hoping to make the last three races, maybe the last one for sure. I can start riding in August and it should take me a month to get up to speed from there."

DBR: How has your mental outlook been since you've been hurt?

RV: "Yeah, when I first got hurt I wanted to shoot someone because you have to realise that I went for surgery in Seattle and I was in a hotel room for three weeks. It was a couple days in a hotel, two days in the hospital for surgery, a week in a hotel, back in the hospital for three days for another surgery and then back in the hotel for weeks. Then there was the anaesthesia and the pain pills that went along with everything. It was a nightmare for sure. It was bad and honestly, at different points, it was really depressing."

DBR: That's two years in a row that you will have missed the outdoors – when you come back will you be the same Ryan Villopoto that we've always seen or will these injuries make you more cautious?

RV: "Well supercross is definitely different on a 450 than I thought. They are so big and so heavy and powerful that it takes a special skill to adapt to it. But I just go back to thinking about Glen Helen last year when I went 1-1 and I think that's something I can do again easy. I was looking forward to racing the outdoors this year but this happened and that's too bad for me."

DBR: You are in a contract year – have there been any talks recently?

RV: "There are definitely talks on the manufacturer side of it and the sponsor side of things. We're all trying to figure everything out and hopefully it will happen soon. There's nothing heavy going on but the Kawi guys are working on it. My first choice is to stay at Kawasaki, the guys there and at Monster are great people to work with and I hope to make it work over there again. I've been on the bikes so long that it feels like home there."

DBR: I saw you at Hangtown checking things out so how was it?

RV: "I watched a bit there and that's the first race, it's kind of like, whatever... Hangtown is a tough track to ride and everyone wants to get through that one and score some points. The week off and then at Texas, that's where the season really starts. It's super-hot there, rough and that's where everything really starts."

"I like Texas, it's one of the better tracks and I think things have sorted out a little bit. Eli got a taste of the outdoors! He's still really fast though and one of the better riders to come out of the amateurs. You can't really judge anything by Hangtown, it's a different deal like I was saying. You just don't know really, it's hard to tell and you shouldn't make judgments from that race. It's super-tough to ride."

"The 250 class is really good racing. Those guys are going for it. I enjoy watching the 250 class but I don't care to watch the 450 class..."

DBR: Because you just sit there and think about what could've been?

RV: "Yeah, exactly, I sit there and think about what could've been and I'll tell you that what could've been is me winning all the time [laughs]. That's what I really think. It's a bummer and that's racing but I just know I could win races and I would be a front runner for sure."

DBR: What are your thoughts on the 250 class?

RV: "Well Christophe is a hard dude to read, I think everyone knows that. He's not just out there to win motos, well if he can he'll go out there and win them but I really think he's looking long-term at the



POTATO WAFFLE!

SIDELINED STATESIDE SUPERSTAR RYAN VILLOPOTO TALKS US THROUGH THE HEALING PROCESS AND SHARES HIS VIEWS ON THE NATIONALS' MAIN MOVERS AND SHAKERS...

Words by STEVE MATTHES Photo by STEVE COX

championship. He's going to do exactly enough to win the title and not do anymore than is necessary. I've been there and the harder you ride a 250F, the more likely that you can suffer a failure and he knows that. He's going through the weekends and scoring as many points as he can and it'll come down to the end.

"It's good to see Rattray win and that's probably one of the hardest things to do is win an overall, you got to keep it together for two races. Good for him and I know he had a rough start but he's coming around."

"As far as Jake Weimer, well I was there for three years on that team and I know that the team runs super-smooth and you're expected to win races so he's got to be a bit bummed. I haven't talked to him about things, we all know that he should be doing better and it's not something he wants to talk about. Everyone knows he should be doing better. Remember last year he struggled a bit at the start and then he turned it on. He'll be there at the end I think like last year."

"As far as the kid, everyone is talking Eli up and he's riding well, he's super-fast and all that but it's the same thing as Barcia – he didn't ride supercross last year and he came out and just killed it. So just wait until he goes and has to get ready for supercross, then quickly change and get ready for motocross. I don't think he'll have the jump on everyone like this year. He was ready for Hangtown and it showed, let's see him do it with a whole year under his belt."

"Barcia may be feeling that right now – it's just bam, bam, bam and you're racing all the time. It's definitely a different ball game when that happens. Trey Canard has my buddy Tim Ferry helping him out and that will help, that guy has so much racing experience underneath him, it's going to help Trey."

DBR: All right let's move onto the 450 class. Your thoughts on that?

RV: "I definitely thought Mike Alessi would be better, he's not riding that well and sucking big time [laughs]. I mean, he's third in the points but he was winning races last year and now he's going backwards. He's off the pace for sure right now."

Actually, maybe this is his normal pace but now he's not getting 25-bikelength holeshots and running away from everyone. I know about life in the back of the pack and it's not that easy! Do you think he'll switch back to a 450 soon if he keeps getting bad starts?"

DBR: No I don't, that would be a massive PR disaster for KTM.

RV: "Yeah but it's Tony Alessi – he doesn't care about these things."

DBR: What about the other guys in the class?

RV: "Well Ben Townley has been good, just some small mistakes have been holding him back. He'd be my pick to win – I'd love to see him win it. I'll do whatever I can to help that guy win. The little mistakes make the difference and that's what happened to him when he raced me. It's the small stuff. He needs to clean those up and I hope he does. I'd like to get him to my place and work with him when I get back."

"Ryan Dungey has been strong, he won by quite a bit and rode well. I wasn't at the two races that he won but he looked to be on it. I think we'll see him win the title – I think he's better than anyone out there right now. I would like to see Ben or Reed get up there and challenge him because I'd really rather not see that guy win any more titles."

"Guys like Short, Millsaps and Grant are fast for sure but I can't see them being there each and every week – they won't be there week-in, week-out. Grant is very fast and talented but it's two races a weekend and you have to hold it together for 12 weekends. Brett Metcalfe hasn't surprised me, he's riding very good and fast. I think we all knew he'd be a good 450 rider. I was impressed at Hangtown at how fast Millsaps was, he got tired but he held on to the end."

"Guys like Michael Byrne and Nick Wey aren't doing that well right now but they'll be around at the end. Wey has come on strong in the last two motos and he's had some crashes the last two races but I think he'll get better. Byrne is hurt now and he's going to find it tough to come back this year to where he was last year."





CATCH-UP!

A BROKEN LEG THE WEEK BEFORE THE 2010 GPs KICKED OFF ENDED GAUTIER PAULIN'S CHANCES OF LIFTING THE MX2 TITLE BEFORE A WHEEL WAS TURNED IN ANGER BUT THE 20-YEAR-OLD YAMAHA MONSTER ENERGY RIDER'S STILL DETERMINED TO BEAT THE FACTORY KTM'S AT LEAST ONCE THIS SEASON...

Interview and photos by Nuno Laranjeira

Last year's FIM bronze medal winner in the MX2 class, Frenchman Gautier Paulin was the early-season pace-setter in 2009 in just his second full season in GPs until he was overhauled by eventual champ Marvin Musquin and Rui Goncalves.

The former BMX world champion was then picked up by Michele Rinaldi's Yamaha Monster Energy factory team and after a good pre-season SX showing in the US where he took a sixth in the Main Event at Anaheim 2 he was highly fancied for MX2 honours in the 2010 GPs. But a week before the series opener he crashed in practice and broke his fibula which meant the 20-year-old missed the first four GPs and has been playing catch-up ever since...

DBR: Looks like you've almost recovered from your injury if we look at the latest results...

GP: "The recovery is like 98 per cent done. It was really painful for me this injury as it was worse than we were thinking. I felt some pain when I had to put on my shoes and I later found out that there was a small crack on the tibia together with the broken fibula. It took me a long time to recover because the fibula was broken on the bottom so my leg had to be locked, completely immobilised. I lost a lot physically but mentally I kept strong during that time so I'm now catching up. In France I won the qualifying and I did the fastest lap time at the end of the second moto meaning that my good shape is coming back. I know I have the technique and the team, I just have to trust myself and focus more than ever to get a moto win fast."

DBR: You must be disappointed with yet another year gone regarding a possible title – how are you dealing with that?

GP: "Mentally it was hard to just stand there waiting to recover. I was racing the pre-season with those guys before the first GP in Bulgaria so it wasn't easy to digest the idea of not being there... Even more difficult to watch Herlings winning two

motos in Valkenswaard when I had beaten him in Mill, another sand track just 20 miles from his house. It was hard to watch and hear it while you're just standing there looking at your broken bones. You know, in a way it was useful to stand there as I was able to study their riding even better so I feel that I know them a bit more now and that can help me to ride in a more intelligent way."

DBR: After watching from the sidelines who do you think is the most effective rider?

GP: "I like Marvin because he's really smooth and wins everything but I don't think that he's an aggressive rider. I don't like to see Roczen's position on the bike, he looks a bit awkward in his chest protector but he is really aggressive with all those crazy scrubs and jumps – I think that it's good for your pictures also [laughs]. I think that the one who has some character is Jeffrey Herlings – when I'm riding with him he tries every time to pass me back so that's a cool guy to bang bars with."

DBR: You lead the MX2 championship early on in '09 but didn't manage to go the distance so what was missing?

GP: "I lacked a good amount of experience obviously. My bike wasn't the best, I broke it twice. I was also hearing from too many people around me and everything was going well for everyone and for the other riders but me. There was some bad luck involved as well and I had to improve in the sand too."

DBR: Why couldn't you beat the KTM's? Is it going to be the same this year?

GP: "I know the KTM's are really good because they all start at the front but that can always change. I have a fantastic bike this year and I can beat them just by being consistent on the bike. I want to be the first rider to end the KTM supremacy this year and get an overall victory for Yamaha."

DBR: Why didn't you stay at Bud? What was missing there?

GP: "I like the Bud team and the people there but they're a young team so didn't have the support needed from the factory last year – they didn't have the bike I needed to be world champion. They did have a good engine and suspension but that's just a part of it and not enough to be first at the end of the year."

DBR: What are the main differences between Bud Racing and Yamaha Monster Energy?

GP: "At Rinaldi they're constantly working on the bike trying to develop it whereas with Bud, being a small team I had the bike at the start of the season and that was it until the end of the year. Because Rinaldi's a factory team I don't have to hear about any problem concerning the bike – they don't tell me anything, I just have to concentrate on my physical condition and improve on my riding. With Bud it was great to have the family side of it but the role everyone has, it's not clearly defined and that can cause trouble."

DBR: How is it to be a factory rider?

GP: "It's great, I'm just pissed off about my injury, really. For example, when I was in America I just had to arrive with my bag and everything was taken care of. They're very professional, I don't have to worry about anything. My bike is always ready and I also have a good practice bike together with a training mechanic which I pay myself so I don't have any worries regarding mechanical issues. My girlfriend is also with me at the races and I can have peace whenever I need."

DBR: The last time a 250F Yamaha won a moto was with Zach Osborne in Turkey in 2009 – do you feel a responsibility to do well?

GP: "No, I don't have any kind of pressure – the team is very happy with me and they tell me that every time which is great to hear. Of course I want to get results soon for my own peace of mind and consequently everyone around me will also be happy."

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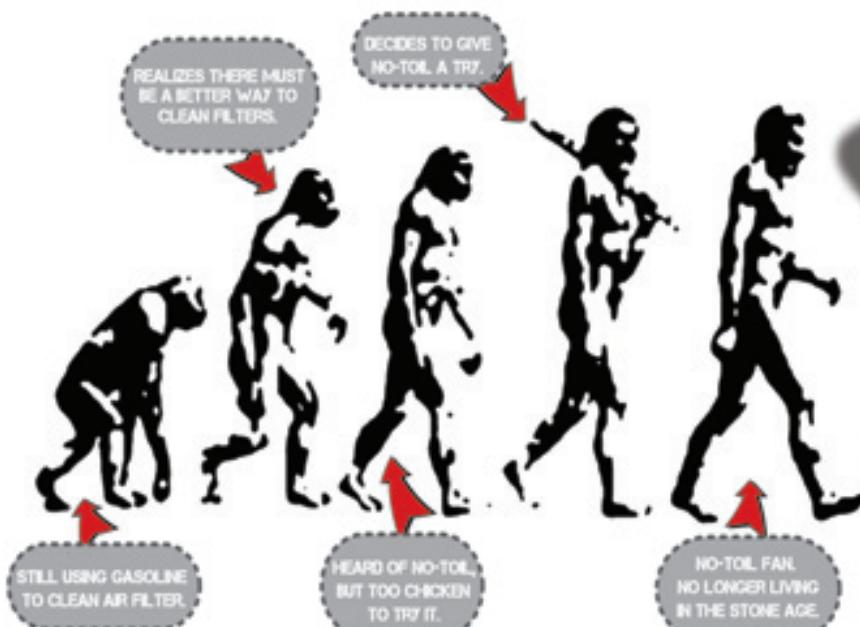
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RINALDI RECKONS...

TEAM BOSS MICHELE ON GAUTIER

DBR: What's your opinion on Gautier – is he what you expected?

MR: "We are now learning how to work with him because he is young – only 20 years old – so he doesn't have a big experience but he's talented and fast. It has been a mutual learning experience until now but we're very happy with him. He proved already he can be pretty fast and strong so we're trying to give him all the best so he can only focus on his riding."

DBR: Would you contemplate putting him in the MX1 class next year?

MR: "Personally, I think that for his career he should continue one more season in MX2. He's young and he only started to race a few years ago – seven I believe – and the majority of the 20-year-olds we have here already have something like 13 years riding motocross so I believe he needs more time on the 250."

DBR: You had a really fine-tuned winter preparation, controlling your physical condition and practice over in America. What was it like to work with David Vuillemin? Tell us a bit about what it was like being guided by the Cobra in the US?

GP: "I met him at the end of 2008 and then we spent the season as team-mates at Bud Racing last year. At the end we became friends and because I wasn't working with Jacky [Vimond] anymore I asked if he could help me as he just decided to finish his career. He accepted it and so he built my actual training programme. We started to work together along with Ludo Kiefer, my practice mechanic coming from Bud. This way we had a small team and we went everywhere in America, working really hard to prepare for the season. He knows all the people, all the tracks and shortcuts to get there, everything really."

DBR: Did they notice you out there?

GP: "I know I made a good impression there."

I was surprised because a lot of the media wanted to do some interviews so that was good for me."

DBR: The American dream – do you still have it? I bet you were hoping to have had better results in Glen Helen...

GP: "For me it's the same riding motocross in the world championship or in the US – what I really like is supercross. We will have to see the next couple of years but for now I need to stay in Europe, get more experience and try to win the title. I like the sport in the US as well as the country but I wouldn't stay and live there."

DBR: What do you think of Christophe POURCEL? It must feel really good to have a fellow Frenchman achieve so much success in the USA?

GP: "He has a different character from the others but he has a determination like nobody else, the way he rides and wins is really smart. He's a great rider with a great style also."

DBR: Given your moto victory on a 450F at the Motocross des Nations, how much longer do you plan to stay in the MX2 class? Until you reach the age limit?

GP: "I don't know yet – maybe next year, maybe not. I don't know..."

DBR: Would you contemplate moving to MX1 in 2011 if you can't be champion this year? Would the team support you?

GP: "It depends on many things, I don't know yet but I would like to have the title in MX2. I feel that they can help me in both classes if that would happen."

DBR: What about if an American team made a nice proposal?

GP: "I like to have the maximum proposals possible of course. If it's a nice team – MX2 or MX1 – why not? If I don't sign a contract before and some team gets me a fantastic deal and the best bike I think anyone would go although I'm really happy here, I have everything."

POMMIE GUNS!

BILLY, BRAD AND BRY SHOOT DOWN THE AUSSIES AT THE MANJIMUP 15,000...

Words and photos by Jason Ecclestone

Manjimup in Western Australia is famous for three things – Pink Lady apples, ancient hardwood forests and the Cosy Creek motocross track, a vast, undulating natural terrain circuit which winds its way through the tall timber on the outskirts of town.

For an almost unbroken 30 years the Manjimup Motorcycle Club has staged the Manjimup 15,000 – the name's derived from the original value of prize money – which when it was first staged in 1980 was the richest motocross event ever held in Australia. Brit Roger Harvey took home the \$5,000 first prize back then and ever since the Manjimup 15,000 has been hotly contested by some of the sport's great names – Jeff Leisk, Jimmy Ellis, Rob Herring and the late Andrew McFarlane have all

won there. Throw in the Motocross des Nations in 1992 and a world 125cc championship round in 1993 won by Andrea Bartolini and you start to get a feel for the history and the charm of this club, its circuit and this event.

After a three-year lay off the event was successfully revived in 2009 by Willy Thompson and the Dirt High Promotions team. A former state and national enduro champion, Willy is a family man who is passionate about the sport and knows how to get the job done. And when Brad Anderson, Billy MacKenzie and his cousin Bryan all confirmed their entries for 2010 the stage was set for a classic UK versus Australia battle Down Under.

The inaugural Manjimup Cup pitted Brad, Billy and Bry against the top three Aussies on the day. Injuries to some of the best home riders

– plus some teams simply not being willing to make the 3,000-mile journey – meant that the Aussie threesome would be made up entirely of Western Australians. Louis Calvin, Paul Humbertson and Michael Addison are all riders that on a good day battle hard for a top 10 finish at the Nationals so to challenge for the Manjimup Cup they'd need to produce something very special...

The opening moto for the Manjimup Cup saw Brad Anderson get the jump and take the holeshot but it was Louis Calvin hot on his heels that had the fans roaring. Billy MacKenzie got a shocking start and went down and with the short race distances – five laps – Billy had some serious work to do to salvage the moto. So when he crashed again in traffic on lap three all hope of a decent points haul were gone and



Bryan MacKenzie rips out a bonzer holey!



manjimup 15,000

Cosy Creek is a slice of motocross paradise



Billy and Brad battle it out Down Under – it's just like old times (only warmer)



Billy could do no better than 14th in the first moto as Anderson took the win with Calvin in second place and Bryan third.

In the second moto it was Calvin first into turn one but he ran wide and let Bryan through for the holeshot. Billy was fired up after the disaster in the first race and wasted no time in getting to the front. Anderson tried to stay on terms with Billy but crashed halfway round lap one. Calvin took second after a puncture sent Bryan backwards and Anderson fought hard through traffic to salvage third.

Next up were four one-lap sprint races with half the field eliminated at the end of each race and the other half going through to the next round with \$1200 up for grabs for the winner of the fourth sprint. Billy MacKenzie made his

intentions clear with blistering 1:48s in the first, second and third heats but in the final sprint Brad and Billy came together in a tough right-hander and both went down. Calvin charged through the open door and the crowd cheered him home with Aussies Humbertson and Dean Porter second and third.

In the third moto it was clear Billy had the beating of everyone. Calvin, in second, was almost caught by Anderson until a mistake two corners from home by Brad let the Aussie off the hook which meant Ando was trailing Calvin by a point for the overall heading into the fourth and final moto.

With the track seriously carved up and the afternoon sunshine bursting through the tall trees, conditions were tough in the last moto and

when Billy cleared off Anderson knew he only needed to stay out of trouble and finish ahead of Calvin to take the overall. Calvin pushed hard but could do nothing about Anderson and finished third.

So Brad took the overall with 87 points, Louis was second with 86 and Billy – with three wins and the fastest lap of the day – could only manage third after that 14th place in the first moto. The inaugural Manjimup Cup was won by the UK by 234 points to Australia's 215 and the Manjimup 15,000 is once again the prestigious, well-supported MX spectacular of 30 years ago. Brad, Billy and Bryan are all hoping to return in 2011 and the organisers will be looking for even more internationals to come and contest this historic event.





mxgp wrap

MX1 fire off the line in Latvia – Clement Desalle (#25) gets the overall in the Baltic

REIGN MAKERS!

DEFENDING CHAMPS TONY CAIROLI AND MARVIN MUSQUIN BEGIN TO PULL CLEAR AS THE 2010 SERIES PASSES THE HALFWAY MARK WITH GPs IN FRANCE, GERMANY AND LATVIA...

Photos by Sarah Gutierrez

There's little denying that the race action in this year's MX1 world championship has been absolutely fantastic so far with no fewer than seven different riders winning motos in 2010. Of those seven, four shared the top spot just this last month with Tony Cairoli and David Philippaerts trading moto victories in France, Ken De Dycker doing a double in Deutschland and Cairoli and Clement Desalle winning one apiece in Latvia.

While Cairoli doesn't take an overall at any of the three GPs he does extend his series lead to a colossal 61 points as closest challenger Max Nagl cracks a collarbone in France and misses that race altogether before coming back in Teutschenthal to run 5-7 and then 7-7 in Kegums.

It's 2008 world champ David Philippaerts who grabs the overall at a wet n' muddy St Jean d'Angely with his 3-1 beating Cairoli's 1-3 on the tiebreaker rule as Clement Desalle joins them on the podium by running a steady 4-2 on the Rockstar Teka Suzuki. Desalle and DP19 stand on the box again in Germany but this time it's De Dycker who dwarfs them as he takes the top step.

Big Ken's definitely not had the best season so far but in Teutschenthal he's back at his bullying best and he manhandles the Monster Yamaha around the twisty 'serpentine' circuit to a fine pair of race wins before baffling everyone by running 10-14 just one week later in Kegums while complaining of a bad back!

There are no complaints coming from Ken's old team CAS Honda as their Muscovite missle Evgeny Bobryshev takes control of race one and leads for over 20 minutes until Desalle reels him in and rockets past for the win. It's been obvious for some time now that Bobby's been gelling with the black beauty and in Latvia he really rocks the establishment by running 2-4 to bag fourth overall behind Desalle (1-2), Cairoli (4-1) and Steve 'The Bomb' Ramon (3-3) and elevate himself to ninth in

the season standings.

Things ain't looking so good for Evgeny's team-mate Gareth Swanepoel whose best finish is 10th as he runs 11-13, 13-10 and 15-12. Surprisingly, Swanie still picks off a pair of positions in the championship chase as he climbs ahead of Josh Coppins and the injured Séb Pourcel to end the month 13th.

British battlers Buildbase CCM remain absent from GP competition although we're lead to believe their return could be imminent – watch this space!

Down in the MX2 division Movin' Marv rules the roost at his home GP in France with another 1-1 score – following straight on from his American masterpiece – before winning again in Germany with a swift 1-2 but any chances of banging out a fourth overall win on the trot go out of the window when he slips up in Latvia – quite literally.

"They put a lot of water on the track and I crashed," says Musquin matter of factly. Only able to get back to seventh in moto two after winning the first, the 20-year-old Frenchman misses out on reaching the podium for only the second time this year – the other occasion being Valkenswaard. But it's still far from being a bad month for the KTM team-leader whose points-per-moto average is still greater than 22. When you consider that only two other riders have scored better than that in a moto over the past three GPs – and then only once each – you can see why Musquin currently sits on a massive 74-point lead. Expect the MX2 world title to be sewn up by the Brazilian GP at the absolute latest!

With Musquin giving up the top step in Kegums it's his team-mate Jeffrey Herlings who steps up to the plate and bats one out of the ballpark to ensure that KTM keep their MX2 clean sweep alive by running 3-1 to beat back Ken Roczen's 2-3. The pair of tenacious teenagers are joined on the podium in Latvia by Frenchman Steven

>>

Far left: Jeffrey Herlings keeps KTM's MX2 win streak going in Latvia
Left: He's not won an overall all month but Tony Cairoli still extends his MX1 series lead



OPEN MONDAY - SATURDAY 9am - 6pm | THURSDAY 9am - 7pm

HELMETS JUNIOR

	BOOTS ADULT	BODYBELTS ADULT	RACE JEANS ADULT	NECK BRACES	SPROCKETS
Vcan	£35.00	Fox F3R	£230.00	Alpinestars	£33.00
THH TX12	£35.00	Fox Comp 5	£130.00	Fox from	£20.00
THH TX22	£50.00	Alpinestars Tech 3	£145.00	Shift Flexite	£15.00
Fox V1 Race	£90.00	Alpinestars Tech 7	£220.00	Acerbis Profile	£27.00
Shift Revolt	£50.00	Alpinestars Tech 8 2010	£310.00	Answer Syncron	
One Ind. Pixel	£80.00	Alpinestars Tech 10	£330.00	Answer AirLe	£119.00
HELMETS ADULT		Shift	£8.00	Answer CYK	£130.00
Arai VX3	£CALL	Sidi Crossfire	£250.00	One Ind.	from £95.00
Troy Lee designs Air/SE2	£CALL	Forma	£145.00	Fox Platinum	£140.00
Airoh Stelt.	from £200	Alpinestars Enduro	£145.00	Fox 360	from £130.00
Fox V1 Race	£100.00	Comp 5 Enduro	£135.00		
Fox V2 from	£120.00	GLOVES JUNIOR	£13.50		
Fox V3 inc Bag	from £225.00	Answer Syncron	£19.00		



GOGGLES

Shift Riot	£95.00	One Ind.	£19.00
Shift Agent	£70.00	Fox Pawtector	£30.00
One Ind. Kombat	from £95.00	Fox Dirt paw	£20.00
Answer	from £75.00	Shift Faction	£28.00
THH TX12	£45.00	Shift Assault	£15.00
GLOVES ADULT			
Oakley Kids	£20.00	MSR NXT	£27.00
Fox Kids main	£25.00	MSR Axis	£16.00
Scott Junior Voltage	£18.00	Troy Lee designs SE	£CALL
Scott 83 X	£19.95	Troy Lee designs GP	£CALL
Scott 89 XI Roll off	£44.00	One Ind.	£17.00
Scott 89 XI	£29.50	MSR Renegade	£22.00

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	DEFLECTORS JUNIOR	RACE SHIRTS JUNIOR	RACE SHIRTS ADULT	RAIN JACKETS/PANTS	
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Fox Main	£29.00	Fox Airframe Small	£60.00	Elmino Pants	£52.00
Oakley 2000	£25.00	Fox R3 Youth	£50.00	Alpinestars Rain Jacket	£42.50
Oakley Proven	£27.00	Fox R3 Small	£40.00	Alpinestars Rain Pants	£37.50
Oakley Crowbar	£40.00	Fox Raceframe Junior	£85.00	Fox Fluid Jacket	£18.00
Enduro Goggle	from £28.00	Fox Raceframe Small	£80.00	RST Kids Jacket	£18.00
Smith Fuel V2 Graphic	£54.00	Thor Sentinel	£64.00	RST Kids Overall	£25.00
Quick strap kit	£16.95	Shift Profile	£45.00	RST Adult Jacket	£28.00
Rip N Roll Hybrid	£37.00	Shift Pee Wee £35.00	Answer Air/Le	£38.00	
Rip N Roll TVs	£24.00	EVS Rev 04	Answer Syncron	£38.00	
LENSES - SEE OUR WEBSITE		EVS Revlite	One Ind.	Seal Skins	£30.00
BOOTS JUNIOR		Alpinestars A10	MSR Axis	Fox Taper	£66.00
Alpinestars Tech 4s	£90.00	Alpinestars Tech 6s	£55.00	Shift Faction	£23.00
Alpinestars Tech 6s	£115.00	Diadora Mk3	£45.00	Fox Platinum	£45.00
Diadora Mk3	£75.00	UFO Reactor 2	£49.00	Fox 360	from £38.00
Fox Comp 5	£95.00	Polisport	£45.00	Fox HC	£28.00
Shift Combat	£75.00	Polisport Mini	£45.00	Shift Assault	£32.00
Shift Speedster	£55.00	DEFLECTORS ADULT	£45.00	Shift Rest	£24.00
RADZ	£38.00	Fox Raceframe	£90.00	Troy Lee designs SE/GP	£CALL
		Fox Airframe	£70.00	Race JEANS JUNIOR	
		Fox R3	£55.00	MSR Renegade	£67.00
		Shift Profile	£50.00	MSR Axis	£47.50
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		Polisport Mini	£45.00	Clutch Rest	from £4.00
		DEFLECTORS ADULT	£45.00	Polisport Handguard	£19.00
		Fox Raceframe	£90.00	Acerbis H/Guards	£29.00
		Fox Airframe	£70.00		
		Fox R3	£55.00		
		Shift Profile	£50.00		
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		Polisport Mini	£45.00		
		DEFLECTORS ADULT	£45.00		
		Fox Raceframe	£90.00	</	

SERIES STANDINGS

MX1 >>

1	Antonio Cairoli	Red Bull KTM	384
2	Clement Desalle	Rockstar Teka Suzuki	323
3	David Philippaerts	Yamaha Monster Energy	298
4	Steve Ramon	Rockstar Teka Suzuki	277
5	Max Nagl	Red Bull KTM	276
6	Ken De Dycker	Yamaha Monster Energy Ricci	269
7	Xavier Boog	KRT Kawasaki	248
8	Tanel Leok	LS Motors Honda	207
9	Evgeny Bobryshev	CAS Honda	189
10	Davide Guarneri	LS Motors Honda	189
13	Gareth Swanepoel	CAS Honda	126
32	Tom Church	Buildbase CCM	11

MX2 >>

1	Marvin Musquin	Red Bull KTM	404
2	Ken Roczen	Teka Suzuki	330
3	Steven Frossard	CLS Kawasaki	308
4	Jeffrey Herlings	Red Bull KTM	286
5	Zach Osborne	Bike It Cosworth Yamaha	249
6	Shaun Simpson	Red Bull KTM	246
7	Arnaud Tonus	Teka Suzuki	236
8	Joel Roelants	JM Racing KTM	214
9	Jeremy Van Horebeek	CLS Kawasaki	209
10	Harri Kallas	Monster Yamaha Gariboldi	182
11	Jake Nicholls	HM Plant Red Bull KTM UK	177
17	Mattis Karro	MVR-D Suzuki	84
20	Mel Pocock	Bike It Cosworth Yamaha	44
33	Max Anstie	Star Racing Yamaha	9
41	Ed Allingham	Bike It Cosworth Yamaha	2



Steven Frossard holds third in MX2



Frossard who just misses out on standing on the steps in Germany alongside Roczen and Musquin as he loses out on a tie-breaker with Zach Osborne.

Osborne's on fire and runs 3-9 in France and 4-3 in Germany before losing momentum with a DNF-5 in Latvia as his silencer gets damaged in a first turn crash. Still, the golden Virginian leapfrogs Shaun Simpson in the standings and currently sits three points clear of the Scotsman in fifth.

Woody has a mixed month with a crash in moto one ruining any chances of a good overall score at the French GP even though he finishes second in the second moto after leading for a spell. Germany's not so kind though and a pair of ninths is disappointing at best with things not getting any better in Latvia as Simpson logs an 8-13 scorecard.

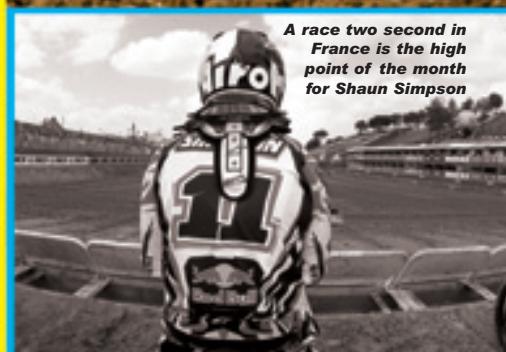
Jake Nicholls also slides a spot down the

series standings from 10th to 11th as Harri Kallas bounces back after taking a pounding from the falling Red Bull arch at Glen Helen. With 15-13, 10-17 and 13-10 scores in the last few GPs The Reverend is going to have to pick up the pace if he's to keep clear of chasing Frenchmen Christophe Charlier and Gautier Paulin in the series standings for the remainder of the year. If he can translate his desire into results then he will.

Consistency continues to pay dividends for Mel Pocock who adds another 15 points to his tally on the Bike It Cosworth Yamaha and sits safe in 20th position in the series standings just three places behind MVR-D Suzuki's Mattis Karro who ruffles a few feathers at his home GP in Kegums as he gets into a scrape with Jake Nicholls. Can we expect more fireworks from these two at round 10 in Sweden?

Find out next month...

Marvin Musquin's march towards his second successive MX2 title continues to gather momentum



A race two second in France is the high point of the month for Shaun Simpson



PROPPA.com Honda's Nez Parker
leads the opener at Whitby



Elliott Banks-Browne loses ground on Martin Barr at Silverstone then claws it all back at Whitby

RED HOT!

THE WEATHER'S SIZZLING AND THERE'S RACING TO MATCH AS THE RED BULL PRO NATIONALS RUN BACK-TO-BACK AT SILVERSTONE AND WHITBY...

Words by Sean Lawless Photos by Sutty and Ian Roxburgh

It's a tale of two tracks for rounds four and five of the Red Bull Pro Nationals with the MC Federation skipping between the new flat field circuit at Silverstone and the tried and tested – although still pretty SX-orientated – Skelder Bank near Whitby.

The stand-out star over the two weekends of racing is PAR Homes Honda's speedy Irish MX2 contender Martin Barr. Marty goes into the Silverstone round with a six-point advantage over DB Racing Honda's Elliott Banks-Browne and emerges with a 28-point lead after ripping to four straight wins.

But one week later it goes tits-up for Marty at Whitby when he's on the receiving end of a mechanical DNF on the opening lap of the first race of the day. With the series leader on his way back to the paddock, Banks-Browne does exactly what he needs to do and nails the race win to drag it back to a three-point deficit.

Second time out Barr makes no mistakes and in the mixed capacity moto holds a storming second behind MX1 rider Ben LaMay all the way to the flag. Elliott's next best MX2 rider so the gap's back at six points again. It's like bloody Groundhog Day! Martin's man enough to take the disappointment of the DNF – not to mention seeing his hard-earned lead evaporate in the hot Whitby sun – on the chin and Elliott's happy to take his breaks where he can.

"Martin had a problem in the first one but it's motocross and that's how it sometimes goes so the points gap has come down a lot," says Elliott. "I've felt a lot better this weekend than I have over the past few weeks. I've got to still work on my speed – Martin's got a little bit on me – but there's only six points in it now."

Anyway, we're getting ahead of ourselves so let's rewind to the previous weekend and a brand new MX venue at Silverstone, the British home of F1 and MotoGP. Following in the new time-honoured tradition of building motocross tracks at major mainstream sporting venues – think Donington, Mallory and Fairyhouse (but not

Chepstow) – the idea is to provide a motocross facility that can take advantage of existing top-drawer facilities.

Silverstone goes one better and round four of the RBPNs actually coincides with the British MotoGP round, the biggest short-track motorcycle event in the country with a claimed 90,000 fans turning out to watch the stars of the Tarmac world. That also means – potentially at least – loads of road race fans getting a taste of MX and the Saturday evening programme certainly draws a big crowd on the three main viewing bankings, even if the post-MotoGP programme on the Sunday afternoon is more sparsely attended.

The MCF are mixing it up on the Saturday and after an opening mixed capacity moto during the day – won by Ben LaMay from Brad Anderson and Stephen Sword in MX1 and Barr from Scott Elderfield and Banks-Browne in MX2 – they switch to a SX format for the evening's entertainment with a series of heats and an LCQ before the Main Event.

Out of the MX1 contenders it's Alaskan Samsung Yamaha rider LaMay who's got the more classy SX experience having competed in the AMA Supercross class last year. But it's wily PROPPA.com Honda rider James Noble who comes out on top after an all-action Main Event from Anderson and LaMay to top MX1 as Barr leads home team-mate Elderfield and LPE Kawasaki's Kristian Whatley in MX2.

Sunday's two points-paying races see LaMay, who seems to get quicker and quicker every weekend, notch-up back-to-back wins as he closes to within 11 points of series leader Brad Anderson who goes 4-2 and Noble who cards 3-4. With Barr out front in MX2 it's Banks-Browne who runs 4-2 for second overall over the weekend with Whatley snapping up third with a 3-3 card.

So it's LaMay and Barr carrying the momentum into Whitby but his race one DNF derails the Irishman while the American >>



FMX commentator Jay and the boys rock out on Saturday night

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Embo's US import Ben LaMay leads Brad Anderson at Silverstone

stutters even earlier with a second corner crash in the opener dropping him down the pack. PROPPA.com Honda's Nathan Parker leads the field in the early stages with Noble in tow as Anderson, who stays upright but suffers a shocker of a start, carves his way up through the field.

As the race hits half-distance Parker starts to fade and first Noble, then Ando, go past. Gordon Crockard on the PBM Kawasaki is also on the move and in the closing laps he's up to third as Noble claims a popular win around his home circuit. LaMay recovers to fifth at the flag and Banks-Browne is happy to snap up the 25 points for first MX2 man home in seventh, just ahead of class rival Elderfield with PAR Homes Honda's Luke Hawkins taking 20 points as third-placed MX2 pilot in 11th.

LaMay nails the holeshot in the last Pro Nats moto of the day but it's red-flagged when some of the gates fail to drop. From the restart it's LaMay who again out-drags everyone into the first right-hander and he stays at the head of the chasing pack all the way to the end, looking super-smooth through the track's technical rhythm section.

"It went pretty good," says LaMay, "I got the holeshot in the second moto

and had Martin Barr right on my butt the whole race but I won the moto. Shame I screwed up in the first moto – I crashed in the second turn – and came from last to fifth and rode pretty good the whole day so I feel good."

Barr pretty much stays with him for the full race distance as Anderson comes home third – and second MX1 man – to nick the overall on the day from Noble who can't quite seal the deal with a pass on Gert Krestinov for fourth.

"I didn't expect to do anything today," admits Ando. "The track's quite supercross and I'm an old-school rider. First race I got a bad start and come from something like 16th to nearly winning it which I was pleased about and in the second race I pushed the first few laps but I couldn't catch Martin so I had to settle for third but it's given me the overall for the day and stretched my lead by a few points."

Banks-Browne's 1-2 card earns him the overall in MX2 from Elderfield's 2-3 and Hawkins gets on the podium after backing up his third with seventh 250cc pilot home second time out. Barr's race two performance still nets him seventh on the day but the title race has just closed right up again as the series heads to Pontrilas on July 10/11.

SERIES STANDINGS

RBPN MX1 >>

1	Brad Anderson	PAR Honda	263
2	Ben LaMay	Samsung Yamaha	249
3	James Noble	PROPPA.com Honda	214
4	Carl Nunn	MVR-D Suzuki	183
5	Nathan Parker	PROPPA.com Honda	178
6	Gordon Crockard	PBM Kawasaki	172
7	Alex Snow	Albion Kawasaki	157
8	Gert Krestinov	Maxxis Henderson LPE Kawasaki	142
9	Alfie Smith	Motoward Yamaha	113
10	Jason Dougan	Phoenix Bike it Cosworth Yamaha	108

RBPN MX2 >>

1	Martin Barr	PAR Honda	258
2	Elliott Banks-Browne	DB Racing Honda	252
3	Kristian Whatley	Maxxis Henderson LPE Kawasaki	218
4	Bryan MacKenzie	Horseman Kawasaki	163
5	Stuart Edmonds	Electraction TM UK	145
6	Lewis Tombs	Yamaha	118
7	Will Worden	Wheeldon Suzuki	110
8	Scott Elderfield	PAR Honda	108
9	Neville Bradshaw	Samsung Yamaha	99
10	Mark Eastwood	Wiseco Honda	88

FUCHS SILKOLENE 2S EXPERT OPEN >>

1	Mark Eastwood	Wiseco Honda	244
2	James Noble	PROPPA.com Honda	218
3	Nathan Parker	PROPPA.com Honda	204
4	Stuart Edmonds	Electraction TM UK	177
5	Will Worden	Wheeldon Suzuki	148

FUCHS SILKOLENE 2S EXPERT 125 >>

1	David Willet	Bladez Salon Yamaha	341
2	James Dunn	Suzuki	321
3	Jim Davies	TM	320
4	Luke Remmer	Kawasaki	276
5	Pete Mitchell	Suzuki	196

FUCHS SILKOLENE 2S JUNIOR OPEN >>

1	Jason Kendrick	Yamaha	244
2	Daniel Ward	Suzuki	211
3	Shane Headon	Kawasaki	197
4	George Foames	Suzuki	190
5	Corey Nemeth	Kawasaki	167

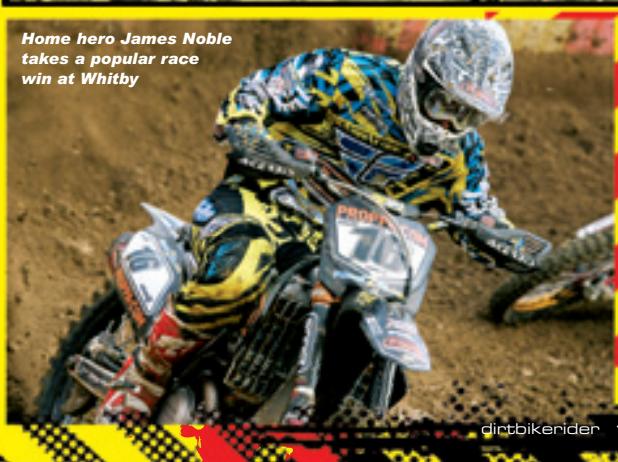
FUCHS SILKOLENE 2S JUNIOR 125 >>

1	Charles Statt	Kawasaki	353
2	Ben Thomson	KTM	248
3	Ashley Crossley	Yamaha	247
4	Corey Nemeth	Kawasaki	231
5	Simon Booth	KTM	215

Skelede Bank's an awesome setting for top-flight motocross



Home hero James Noble takes a popular race win at Whitby



BOBRY DAZZLER!

CAS HONDA'S RUSHIN' RUSSIAN TAKES THREE FROM THREE AT LYNG IN MX1 BUT IT'S ALMOST TOO TIGHT TO CALL IN MX2 WHERE OSBORNE AND NICHOLLS GO TO WAR...

Photos by Nuno Laranjeira

On paper it's a whitewash. In reality it's much closer. But you can't argue with a 75-point maximum and his three race wins see CAS Honda's Evgeny Bobryshev open up a 33-point lead at the top of the Maxxis MX1 British championship standings as the series hits the halfway mark at Lyng in Norfolk.

It's also Evgeny's third overall win in a row as the Russian continues to combine speed with an uncanny ability to learn the layout of what are – for him at least – a succession of new tracks. A pretty much old-school circuit, Lyng's sandy base cuts up real rough as the day progresses which throws down a tough test of mind, body and soul.

The opening MX1 moto is too close to call for the entire 20-minute plus two lap duration as defending champ Brad Anderson continually harasses Bobryshev. But the tough Russian keeps his cool and keeps the aggressive PAR Honda rider behind him to win by less a second. Gareth Swanepoel brings the second CAS Honda home in third with CCM Racing's Stephen Sword fourth from Bike It Cosworth Yamaha rider Jason Dougan.

Race two is another Bobryshev benefit as the Russian leads every lap en route to a three-and-a-half second win from his team-mate Swanie with Ando over 10 seconds further back in third as Swordy takes another fourth, this time ahead of PROPPA.com Honda's Nathan Parker who posts his best finish of the season in fifth.

The final MX1 moto sees Swordy applying early pressure to Bobryshev before the lingering effects of his recent bout of the Epstein-Barr virus start to kick in and first Swanie, then Ando, find a way through. With the top three done and dusted, the Scot is closed down by PROPPA.com Honda's James Noble but bravely hangs on to record another fourth-placed finish.

So with four rounds down and four to go CAS Honda look firmly on course to regain the British MX1 title they lost last year with Bobryshev leading the way on 263 points from Swordy on 230 and Swanepoel on 223. Ando's bid to retain his #1 plate is faltering and he's now 46 points off the leader's pace – although Foxhill is next up on July 25 and Brad's already posted a double win there ahead of Swordy at the opening round of the Red Bull Pro Nationals back in March. So don't count him out just yet.

Down in MX2 and the man on form – on the world and domestic stages – is Bike It Cosworth Yamaha's Zach Osborne. Fresh from a podium the fortnight before at the USGP at Glen Helen, Zach's carrying a three-race win-streak into Lyng and he stretches that to four with victory first time out. But, just as with Bobryshev's opening MX1 race win, the 25 points that are now inked into the record books under Zach's name don't tell the full story.

It's HM Plant Red Bull KTM UK's Jake Nicholls who takes the holeshot and the 20-year-old from Ipswich, despite coming under pressure from Osborne as the race passes half-distance, is looking good for his debut race win of the 2010 series when with two laps to go he cartwheels on a downhill section and gets wedged under his bike. With The Reverend down Osborne inherits the lead with his team-mate Mel Pocock in tow and DB Racing Honda's Elliott Banks-Browne demotes Nicholls to fourth. Jake manages to get back up to third on the final lap but that's as high as he can climb as the flag comes out.

With the bit between his teeth, Nicholls fires to another holeshot second time out and lays down some fast opening laps to build an early advantage so he can control the race from the front. A mistake on lap two from Zach sees him drop from sixth to 10th and although



the American fights back to finish fourth he's almost 37 seconds off the pace. It's Banks-Browne who provides the initial threat to Nicholls before Pocock moves into second on lap four, only to be pushed back a place three laps later by PAR Homes Honda's Martin Barr who holds the position to the end to record his best result of the series so far.

Barr sets the early pace in the final MX2 moto, leading for two laps before Pocock comes past as Osborne holds third and Nicholls fights back from seventh after hitting the gate at the start. Osborne wastes little time in taking the lead from his teenage team-mate and with a clear track ahead of him it's pretty much a done deal. With two laps to go Nicholls is into second but Zach's able to cruise to a nine-second win with Pocock holding onto third as Barr comes back from an early mistake to take fourth ahead of Bryan MacKenzie on the Horseman Kawasaki.

Osborne's final race win gives him the overall on the day ahead of Nicholls and Pocock and extends his series lead by a single point to 25. That's just a race win and with both the top two already with a DNF to their names so far this season it means there's little room for error. Just 13 points further back, Barr's also poised to pounce if Osborne or Nicholls suffer any further misfortunes.

Evgeny Bobryshev rips to a holeshot – and a hat-trick of race wins – as the series hits halfway



Osborne's now 25 points clear at the top of MX2

SERIES STANDINGS

MX1 >>

1	Evgeny Bobryshev	263
2	Stephen Sword	230
3	Gareth Swanepoel	223
4	Brad Anderson	217
5	Jason Dougan	176
6	Gordon Crockard	152
7	James Noble	124
8	Carl Nunn	123
9	Ben LaMay	123
10	Tom Church	119

MX2 >>

1	Zach Osborne	251
2	Jake Nicholls	226
3	Martin Barr	213
4	Elliott Banks-Browne	177
5	Mel Pocock	178
6	Kristian Whatley	167
7	Mattis Karro	140
8	Shane Carless	137
9	Alan Keet	112
10	Neville Bradshaw	103

ewc wrap

Spanish flier
Cristobal Guerrero takes
the E1 win on the opening
day in Slovakia



HIGHS AND LOWS!

MIXED WEATHER AT ROUNDS FOUR AND FIVE OF THE EWC SERIES IS MATCHED BY MIXED FORTUNES FOR SOME OF THE CHAMPIONSHIP'S TOP RIDERS

Words and photo by **Jonty Edmunds**

The Polish and Slovakian rounds of this year's Enduro World Championship were always going to play an important role in deciding the outcome of the EWC's four primary classes. With sand and mud guaranteed, for many the 'middle season' events held significant importance.

With sand generally best suited to the Scandinavian riders and mud best suited to, well, those that like mud, the two events were looked forward to and dreaded in equal measure. As it turns out the two races deliver more than a few surprises.

One result that isn't really a surprise is Finn Eero Remes picking up his first ever EWC day win with a podium topping-ride on day one in Poland. With E1 class leader Antoine Meo making a schoolboy error and clocking into a time control one minute early, the Finn claims a comfortable win. Day two's a very different story.

Determined to make up for his cock-up, Meo comes out swinging and in no uncertain terms tops the class to maintain his stranglehold on the championship. But one week later in Slovakia things again don't go so well for Meo during the opening day and with Spaniard Cristobal Guerrero claiming the win Meo is again kept off the top step.

Slovakia sees the return of Johnny Aubert, who after his double zero score at the GP of Italy had been struggling to produce his best form. Winning day two after a runner-up result on day one, the reigning Enduro 2 world champ moves to within striking distance of Remes in the championship but is still a long, long way behind countryman Meo.

"It's great to be back again," comments Aubert after the race. "Not knowing why you're not able to ride as fast as you know you can is so frustrating. I feel much better now and for the first time since the start of the season I really feel like I'm riding like I can. I'm hoping that by the time the championship starts again at the end of August I'll be fully fit and 100 per cent ready."

Mike Ahola's E2 championship fight with Ivan Cervantes remains close throughout rounds four and five with Ahola claiming a double class win in Poland. With the sandy conditions much to his liking he doesn't win by as much as many expect

him to with just one second separating the duo on day two.

At the slippery Slovakian event Ahola gets his first championship break as Ivan fails to finish on the podium on day one while the Finn manages to stay ahead of Frenchman Rodrig Thain to win before finishing second to first-time winner Thomas Oldrati on day two. More than 20 points ahead in the E2 standings after the Slovakian GP, Ahola is one of many riders pleased to see the back of the eastern European races.

"Both events have been good for me but I'm pleased that the race in Slovakia is over," comments Mika. "It wasn't as bad as it was last year but it was still a really hard race. I can't believe how close things have been between myself and Ivan Cervantes at times this year. I have a good lead in the championship now with events I enjoy still to come."

Christophe Nambotin should have claimed a double E3 class win at the GP of Poland but when a rear wheel problem forces him out of the opening day's competition it not only hands David Knight the win but has a significant outcome on the title chase. With Knight picking up the 25 points on a day when he rides a long way from his best, on day two he finishes third behind Nambotin and Italian Simone Albergoni. Again failing to perform well, a frustrating weekend in Poland still ends with the Manxman extending his championship advantage.

In Slovakia Nambotin makes it to the end of the opening day's competition without problems to claim an impressive win ahead of Knight but on day two, at a time when he needs to be winning in order to pull back lost points, he places off the podium in fourth.

Dominating the second day, Knighter finishes ahead of two-stroke riders Seb Guillaume and Albergoni having looked like an altogether different rider to the one that struggled in Poland.

"We made a few changes to my bike before the race and they worked perfectly," explains Knight. "I knew these would be important races as far as the championship was concerned and they have been. Even though I didn't ride so well in Poland I got lucky and extended my points lead. I'm going to have a little time off now before getting stuck into the final few rounds of the championship."

SERIES STANDINGS

ENDURO 1 >>

1	Antoine Meo	Husqvarna	228
2	Eero Remes	KTM	186
3	Johnny Aubert	KTM	178
4	Nicolas Deparros	Kawasaki	151
5	Matti Seistola	Husqvarna	150
24	Paul Edmondson	Suzuki	10

ENDURO 2 >>

1	Mike Ahola	Honda	241
2	Ivan Cervantes	KTM	220
3	Thomas Oldrati	KTM	187
4	Pierre Alexandre Renet	KTM	169
5	Joakim Ljunggren	Husaberg	145
17	Tom Sagar	Suzuki	37

ENDURO 3 >>

1	David Knight	KTM	234
2	Christophe Nambotin	Gas Gas	204
3	Simone Albergoni	KTM	200
4	Seb Guillaume	Husqvarna	176
5	Marcus Kehr	KTM	151

ENDURO JUNIOR >>

1	Jeremy Joly	Honda	223
2	Lorenzo Santolino	KTM	194
3	Victor Guerrero	Yamaha	163
4	Romain Dumontier	Husqvarna	148
5	Mario Roman	KTM	129
29	Alex Rockwell	Husqvarna	18



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When nailing down the initial brief for the new Rage Club Sandwich feature one or two fairly obvious but nonetheless important aspects were high on the list of DBR priorities. Firstly, to cover all of the different racing codes – namely the ACU, MCF, ORPA and YSMA along with the BSMA – and secondly to geographically map the country as much as possible.

Taking all this into account for this month's club call I crossed the border heading west to the wonderfully tranquil and scenic edge of the Elan Valley in Wales to have a little shuftu at the Rhayader Youth Motocross Club.

The original Rhayader club closed for business some 15 years ago but the need for a replacement in the Mid Wales area was always plain to see so in 2005, with growing children who all wanted to race, Christian Walton, Wyn

Hope and Lynn Evans got their heads together with a few like-minded parents to form the club that we know today.

"Children do not have the amenities in Mid Wales and motorcycle sport has always kept them on the straight and narrow," explains Christian. "And Mid Wales has produced some exceptional off-road motorcyclists."

In the first year of racing the club had just 20 registered members but has now grown to 120 at present. "We're very lucky in these difficult financial times that we're getting a stronger membership," adds Chris. "We feel this is down to running full-length races on highly prepared tracks with a fun atmosphere – and getting home early in time for tea!"

Having first looked at the club's website I noticed they describe themselves as the 'fastest growing BSMA club in the country' and having



progressed enough to host a superb and deservedly highly-acclaimed national round earlier this year at Neuadd, Penybont, it's hard to argue with that fact. It's also hard to argue that they don't have at their disposal a selection of four racing circuits every bit as choice and varied that compare most favourably with any other club in the country – and, importantly, they're all local to the Mid Wales area too. The tracks in question being at Saint Wells, Moelfre, Neuadd and, today's port of call, Cwmythig Hill.

As I arrived at the circuit and looked down from the hillside road it was plain to see for the second round of the Welsh and sixth round of the club championships it was a rather small gathering – less than 70 in total. I have to admit initially my heart sunk a little. However, later in the day I discovered that the low number didn't really pose too much of a problem for a club with

very low overheads, kept that way by a very much hands-on, tight-knit and family-orientated approach to course building and track maintenance at all four circuits. There's much multi-tasking by all members of the committee which means that although it was a low turn-out in comparison to other clubs it's still a viable prospect for this exceptionally well-sorted club.

Looking back now it seems to have been quite appropriate that I first chatted with the Williams family from Abermule close to Newtown and the Evans clan from Welshpool seeing as both have surnames fully rooted in Welsh history. It was appropriate for another reason too – both young Henry Williams and Ally Evans went on to dominate the day's racing in the Inters section, carding three conclusive race victories each. Neither families are members of the Rhayader club but being localish are always more than happy to attend agreeing that they would far rather support a grassroots meeting if the only other option was

to go to a practice track.

"This club is brilliant," reckons Henry's mum. "We get a relaxed day's racing in a fantastic, friendly atmosphere – and I also get a bit of an extra lie-in as it's not too far away and we are usually all done by 3.30pm."

Next up I chatted with the Leach and Waters crowd where in particular 10-year-old Dylan Leach caught my eye as he must be one of the tallest of his age group. "Far too big for a 65," explains his dad Wayne, "so he had to move up into the Inters riding a SW85. This club is a great starting point and we have been with them four years now and there are some quick boys here – it's always competitive with usually around 20 plus in the race."

Dylan actually prefers enduro racing and has also tried his hand at grasstrack with some success but, as his father explained, "he's a real all-rounder and a champ when it comes to startline technique". And so it proved in race two later in the day as Dylan blasted to a scorching holeshot. As for his cousin Ryan

Waters, he confidently told me at the start of the day that he would possibly win and definitely finish in the top three and true to his word only Ally Evans got the better of him in the overall finish with Ryan grabbing second place.

In conclusion it was a great, relaxing day out for all concerned and the drive alone through Shropshire into Wales without any real traffic to speak of was a pleasure in itself. But I think Chairman Chris Walton sums it up best. "Mid-Wales is often described as 'Wales' best kept secret' and we feel RYMXC is the BSMA's best kept secret. Those who come and ride always return so give us a try."

Oh and by the way, come 3.30pm I was actually back on the mountain road and heading home. I wonder where will I end up next?

If you'd like to see your club feature in a future Club Sandwich then contact us at mikegurney5@yahoo.co.uk



Dylan Leach (#101) gets the drop on his Inter class rivals

Rhayader rippers, from left, Jack Edmondson, Alex Walton, Alfie Roberts, Olivia Walton and Scott Plumstead



Thumbs up from Rory and Jason Baldwin



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Alex Brown bags himself a step on the BYMX podium at Dean Moor

NIPPER RIPPERS!

IT'S JUST TOO CLOSE TO CALL ACROSS ALL THREE NATIONAL SERIES IN THE JUNIOR 65cc DIVISION

At a time when the numbers of Junior 65cc runners are seemingly on the decline at both club and national level the real bonus of the 2010 season so far has been the totally unexpected but quite sensationaly good racing seen in the national tiddler class sections.

The mix of the experienced riders from last year's ranks having to fight tooth and nail for every inch of ground against the enthusiastic new rookie intake has been arguably the highlight of the schoolie term so far.

The results at the opening Red Bull Elite Youth Cup of the year at Foxhill when Albie Wilkie and Keenan Hird gapped the field by a massive margin gave absolutely no indication of what was to come. The two-horse race quickly transformed into a full-on feisty Grand National, toughed out at close-quarters resulting in the most competitive tear-up imaginable.

Just look at the combined results of the BYMX, EYC and the BSMA series. Albie Wilkie, Keenan Hird, Taylor Hammal, Drew Warren, Tom Hume, Jake Edey, Alex Walton, Ryan Vickers and James McFayden – quite amazingly nine riders in total – have all posted individual national moto wins with this year's division shaping up to be the best since heaven only knows when!

Keenan was the fastest qualifier at all of the BYMX and EYC rounds up until Whitby when Albie snatched his crown. Keenan has yet to score an overall podium win but with his overall consistency he is looking just as good as anyone right now to lift a national crown.

The trend of the season has been for ever increasing numbers of fresh faces to get in on the act. At BYMX Mepal in May it was Jake Edey and Jamie Osborne who gatecrashed the party and caught the eye. Also catching the eye was a never-to-be-forgotten spot of mum

dancing from Jane Edey as she celebrated Jake's first national win.

And at the latest round of nationals storming performances from Alex Walton, Brandon Sharples and Alexander Brown elevated all three of them to the BYMX podium for the first time this year at Dean Moor. Meanwhile, over at Silverstone the Cobra kids Dylan Woodcock and Ryan Vickers grabbed the limelight with a thumping 1-2 result over high-flying Harry Wickman and Drew Warren.

The Cobra boys quite brilliantly carried this good form to EYC round five at Whitby where they again went 1-2 in the opening moto with Ryan proving he is in the best form of his life right now and good enough to challenge anyone. Ryan scooped up the opening moto win and went on to record 1-3-2-4-3 finishes to nail the overall win and move up into third place in the championship table.

The class doesn't really end there either as there are yet more performers just on the fringes who have threatened the top six and who are well capable of climbing onto the end-of-day podium – Nathan Bache, Harry Kimber, Bradley Flagg and Jed Etchells are four that spring to mind immediately.

So with half the season already gone Albie Wilkie is at the head of BYMX and BSMA standings and Keenan Hird tops out on the EYC chart is but under massive pressure from Taylor Hammal and the rest. With all three championships still in the balance all I can say is thanks for the first half show guys – now let's have more of the same please.

Oh and wouldn't it be just great if we could get all of these guys together in the same place for a little shoot-out! Whatever happened to that champion of champions event?

Hmmmm...



Cobra kid Ryan Vickers



Jake Edey's form is good enough to get his mum up and dancing!

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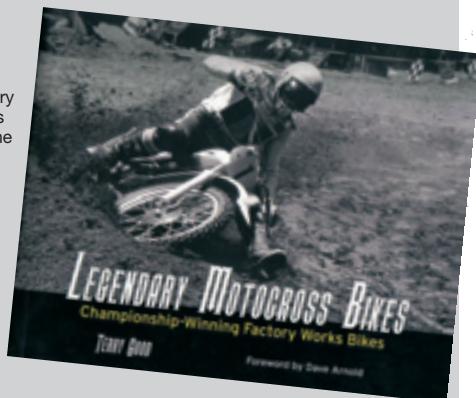
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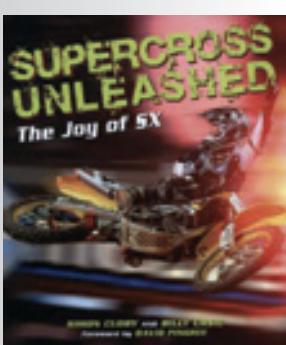
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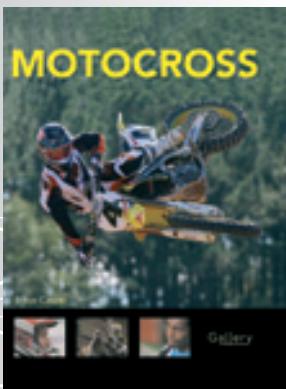
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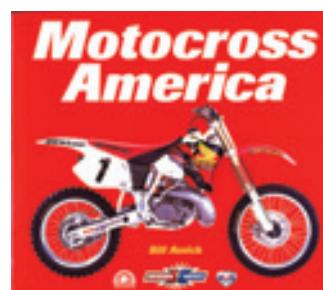
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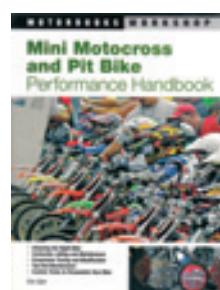
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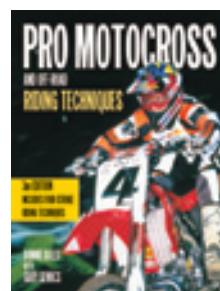
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LYNG-DINGER!

WALKLEY LEAPS INTO THE MXY2 LEAD AS POCOCK CRASHES OUT OF CONTENTION

Breaking the same leg for the third time in as many seasons or indeed any leg when you are barely 16 would be more than enough reason for most teenagers to want to throw in the towel – especially when faced with the prospect of yet another lengthy spell sat on the couch when you should be out there ripping up life.

And 'game over' was in fact the first understandable reaction from a totally gutted and pained Bradley Pocock following the hit that snapped his leg clean into two pieces at Cadders Hill, Lyng. Brad was less than five minutes into the free practise session at round two of this year's MXY2 series when for the second time in 18 months he found himself being carted away with a badly busted leg that was 100 per cent not his fault.

It really should have been a great day for Bradders – he was first time out on a brand spanking new fully-sorted Dixon Cosworth Yamaha worth a small fortune, he had the red plate attached as the series leader and although he didn't know it when he went out to bat he was on the verge of a full GP try-out ride later in the season.

Tough luck is an understatement but I'm happy to report the latest noises coming out of the Pocock camp suggest Brad is already positive with his sights fully set on 2011 for another tilt at the big time. Good on yer Brad but you might be advised to give the MXY2 shindig a wide berth.

It goes without saying the unfortunate incident took the edge off the whole MXY2 show – but the show went on with Gary Sharp nailing down a flying lap sixth time around to convincingly win the qualification session by 2.5 seconds ahead of Kelvin Townsend with Jake Shipton a further second behind in third.

In the opening moto Gary, Tom Kelly, Kelvin, James Dunn, Connor Walkley and Matt Burrows were the six holding sway in that order as they finished the opening lap. The race settled down into a rhythm with Sharp and Kelly at the front dominating proceedings and Tom actually briefly took over at the head of the field for one lap mid-race. But in the closing stages Kelly faltered from second place and Sharp's clutch began to fail allowing Connor to claim the race win.

Matt ran an impressive solid race pulling through from sixth to claim second with James



Matt Burrows grabs second overall at Lyng

A fudged clutch costs Gary Sharp a MXY2 double win



James Dunn holds down third in the standings

MXY2 SERIES STANDINGS

1	Connor Walkley	87
2	Gary Sharp	69
3	James Dunn	64
4	Matt Bayliss	63
5	Luke Norris	57
6	Joe Jones	57

finishing in third. Luke Norris picked up fourth with Sharp in fifth and Kelly recovering to take sixth. The fastest lap of the race went to Sharp.

In race two Tom and Gary once again set the initial pace but Tom's time at the front was again short-lived and he held the lead for just the opening lap. From there on Gary made absolutely no mistake in powering home to take the win. Sharp posted fastest lap number three and finished four seconds ahead of Connor. Burrows started in fifth and finished in third with Norris, Harry McKenna and Matt Bayliss rounding out the top six. Tom crossed the line in seventh.

When it was all totalled Connor found himself on the top step of the Maxxis box holding the red plate as the new series leader and went home with a new LPE contract to autograph. Nice work Connor but on the evidence of the day's action Gary can count himself real unlucky not to have bagged the overall win. Gary had to settle for third with Rob Hooper's Suzuki protege Matt Burrows in second.

The third round of the series will be at Foxhill on July 25 and it will be interesting to see if we get consistency and dominance or will the trend of different race winners continue? So far four races and four different victors.

GOT A STORY FOR RAGE?

Then contact our Youth Editor Mike Gurney at mikegurney55@yahoo.co.uk

DÉJÀ VU!

BILLY'S JOINED IN OZ BY A COUPLE OF OLD SPARRING PARTNERS AND PRETTY SOON THE SPARKS ARE FLYING AS HE GOES BAR-TO-BAR WITH BRAD...

Words by **Billy MacKenzie** Photos by **Matty Muir**

Okay, so after the last National I was determined to get back to my usual pace. I felt terrible at Raymond Terrace and wanted to get back on track with how I was riding at Canberra before it all went wrong! The last two rounds of the Nationals have been messy for me and I haven't felt like I was riding my best, all due to lack of bike time after my injury.

With Brad over and doing so well it gave me a goal to aim for as I know Brad is still riding well back home so when I found out he was coming over we both made sure we got a couple of races together while he was here. So I signed up for Manjimup and that was the next race. The track was prime – easy in my top 10 of favourite tracks – with nice loamy sand, big jumps and a crazy fast straight. It had all the elements that awesome tracks should be made up of.

Race day got under way and I had a fire in my belly to beat Ando after his dominance the previous weekend. We had the usual wind ups and good banter between us before it all and even a competitive game of golf which I managed to concentrate on for once! All in good spirits though and we raced hard when the gate dropped!

My excuse for not beating Brad for the overall came in the first race. We all got pretty terrible picks on the gate – Brad was 20-something, Bry was 35 and I had 38th pick to the line. I got a terrible start and almost went down in the first turn – I tucked my front end and stood the bike up to a stop. I got out of that mistake still midfield and went hard to try get up with the front runners. Halfway round the first lap I went down trying to pass a bunch of guys in a deep sandy right-hander. I had three guys pile into me and ended up at the bottom of a bike pyramid before cleaning myself out the sand and starting near last. I made a big effort and rode well to find myself inside the top 10 in the short five-lap race but with one lap to go I tried making a pass down the inside of a slower rider and went down again. After I picked myself up for almost the third time I was back in 16th and could only pass two more riders by the end.

Ando won the race and I was angry with myself for not being smarter. But in a way it was nice to feel that burn inside and I was even more fired up for the second race! I was confident that I could win if I got myself into a better position so for the next race I really concentrated on the start and got off the gate third behind Bryan and Brad. I got the adrenaline hit and we raced hard for half-a-lap before I held it wide open off a steep ski jump down the middle hill of the track, landing next to Brad and pushing him out on the next tight right-hander. Brad went down and I was left to just ride hard and concentrate on my lines for the rest of the five laps. I worked hard and made sure I didn't just take an easy win – I was pushing myself every lap and eventually won by 10 seconds over second-placed local rider Louis Calvin with Bry third. Brad got up to finish fourth – better than my 14th place effort!

We had a shoot-out before the next points race where half the field would be eliminated after a one-lap dash. I won every sprint until the last important one for the money! The last sprint was exciting and I made hard work of it, starting third after I'd pulled all the holeshots

in the previous sprints. I managed to get past Calvin early then set about chasing down Brad. I got underneath him on a quite fast and hardpack corner – I could have made the pass stick but it would have ended in injury for sure so I turned it hard and we both exited the corner side by side. Brad had the inside on the next downhill – the same one he went down on in the second race – so I set up for the outside to sweep in. But Brad fluffed the corner and span out and I was too close to pull the brakes on and ended up running into the back of him, taking us both out of contention for the money. Nightmare!

The third race was similar to the second – me and Brad got out to a good start and were full bar-to-bar for the first few corners. There was a fire in Brad's belly too after he came off worst in the last race and the fact we took each other out for the cash. We raced fast and close for half-a-lap before I managed to make a pass stick and again concentrate on my own race. Behind me I think Brad made a mistake and went down to let Louis Calvin through for second and from then on I just concentrated on lines and riding smoothly. I only won by two seconds from Calvin but felt more comfortable and controlled. Brad got back on for third.

For the last race I was 10 points down off the win so the overall was realistically out of grabs for the day so I think Brad and Calvin were just concentrating on their own race and I was pretty much left to win the last race easily. The track was super-rough and I felt strong for the full moto – it was only six laps but I pushed hard for the sprint and won the final race by a good margin from Brad and Calvin. Brad only had to beat Louis for the overall so in the end the result from the day was Brad from Louis then me.

There was a 20-minute bonus race straight after the last moto. It was just a thing we threw in last-minute while the sun was still around. I didn't wanna turn down any riding so lined up against the other willing competitors and made the last minutes of sunshine count for some good hard practice. Bry had to pull out because he'd done his bike a mischief and Brad and Calvin didn't go out because they had already won their prize money for the weekend. So I was left again to win the race easily and have some fun on the cool tabletops up the hill. It felt good to do a 20-minute moto around such a rough track and again I felt strong until the end and won the race by over 90 seconds.

So overall my weekend was pretty awesome – I had some really close battles with Brad like old times, I managed to get some extra riding in and made some money from it. I rode strong and fast like I had been before Canberra and felt like I had my winning buzz back.

We had another few weeks off again before the next round so I made sure to get some solid riding in as well as testing some new suspension settings. We went riding to a nice rough sand track and spent two days testing and getting more bike time under my belt. I was back up to churning out 30-minute motos and putting my fastest laps times in at the end which I loved. I had the proper adrenaline rush when I pushed past my comfort zone and it reminded me how much I love riding!

We found a really good set-up in the sand with the new shock we were testing, my lap times were consistently fast and again I was just feeling awesome on the bike and felt ready for the next round in Albury Wadonga.

We arrived in Melbourne on the Saturday before the race – my flight was at stupid o'clock in the morning and I didn't get much sleep. Add to that the three-and-a-half hour drive from the airport to the track (Australia is a big place) and the weekend just didn't start off well from the beginning. I arrived at the airport and ordered myself a nice healthy breakfast smoothie thing with muesli, honey, bananas etc. I asked the bird if it was dairy free and was assured it was. So I ordered it with soya milk because of my allergy but after getting halfway through I could tell it wasn't – the thing was made with dairy yoghurt which she failed to tell me and so that started me off with a churning stomach and the s**ts from the get-go!

Not to make excuses though – I still had a reasonable day and finished second overall behind Cody Cooper and made up a lot more points on Jay Marmont in the championship. I also moved up to second in the championship so there were a lot of positives from the weekend but I know within myself I had more to give. We had an issue in practice where the shock I tested during the week just wasn't working so I had to resort to my old set-up after only qualifying sixth.

So again, all of this leading up to the first race was just going wrong and I was worried it was gonna be an even tougher weekend than it already was. I got off the start in the first race in the top three and quickly made my way to the front and hammered down some real fast laps to pull out a five-second lead. My old set-up was working awesome and I had my groove going. I tried to maintain the gap and control my breathing etc as I could feel my arms tighten up a bit. Usual first race story for me – my arms went and I was just trying my hardest to hang on for the last three laps. I eventually got passed on the last lap by Cooper after cross-cutting in a corner. I was pretty upset about it.

The second race was just terrible from start to finish. I was third off the start and stayed there the whole race. My lines were terrible and I just wasn't using my head. I was getting caught up in the race instead of concentrating on my own lines. I felt a bit drained and knew I had to change things for race three.

The final race got under way and I managed to get in the lead early. I only held it for a lap before getting passed by Tye Simmonds. He came down the inside of me hard and if I hadn't shut off I would have went down! I stuck behind him the whole race and put a small charge in at the end but it was too late.

Looking back on my weekend, I know now the mistakes I made and they won't happen again. However, it's nice to look back and see my results and know I used my head. For a bad weekend the results and points weren't so bad.

Keeping in mind I was something like 60 points down at one point I'm doing all right!

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